

**H**ere after foloweth  
the hystorpe of Gesta  
Romanozum.





**S**ometime there dwelled in Rome a myghty  
Emperour, whyche had a fayre creature to  
hys doughter named Atleta, whome dy-  
uerse great lordes & many noble knyghtes  
desyred to haue to wyfe. Thys Atleta was  
wondrous swyfte on fote, wherfore suche a lawe was  
ordeyned þat no mā shoulde haue her to wyfe but suche as  
myght ouer renne her & take her by strengthe of fote.  
And so it befell that many came & ranne wyth her, but  
she





he was so swyfte that no man myghte followe  
course of rennyng. At y last the kynge com-  
med Damesse unto her father & sayd to hym thus.  
I orde yf it myght please you to gyue me your daughter  
to wyfe. I will gladly renne wyth her. Then sayd her  
father, there is suche a lawe ordeyned & set, that who  
so will haue her to wyfe, must first renne wyth her, &  
yf he fayle in hys course, y he ouertake her not, he shall  
lese hys heed, & yf it fortune hym to ouertake her, than  
shall I wedde her vnto hym. And whā the Emperoure  
had tolde hym all the peyrl that myght fall in y wyde-  
nyng of her, the knyght welfully grownted to abyde  
that iopardye. Than the knyght let ordeyne hym thre  
balles of golde agaynst the rennyng. And whan they  
had begon to renne a lyttel spere, the ponge lady ouer-  
ranne hym, than y knyght threwe forth before her the  
first ball of golde. And whan the Damesse sawe y bal-  
le stouped and toke it vp, and that whyle the knyght  
wanne before her, but that auyled lyttell, for whā she  
percepued that, she ranne so fast that in shorte space she  
gate before hym agayne. And than he threwe forth the  
seconde ball of golde, and she stouped as she dyd before  
to take it vp, and in that whyle the knyght wanne be-  
fore her agayne, whiche thys ponge Damesse scynge  
cōstrayned herselfe and ranne so fast, tyll at the last she  
had hym at a hauntage agayn, & was afore hym, and  
by that tyme they were nygh the marke where they  
sholde abyde, wherfore y knyght threwe forth y thyrde  
ball before her, and lyke as she had done before stouped  
downe to take vp the ball, & whyle she was in takynge  
vp the thyrde ball the knyght gate afore her, and was  
first at the marke. And thus was the wynde.

By this Emperour is vnderstande the father of he-  
uen, and by thys damoyzell is vnderstande the soule of  
man, with whome many deuylles desyre to renne, and  
to deceyue her thzugh theyr tēptacyons, but she wyth-  
standeth them myghtyly and ouercometh them. And  
whan they haue done theyr powe, and may not spede  
than make they thze balles of golde, and casteth them  
befoze her in the thze ages of man, that is to saye, in  
pouth, in manhode, & in olde age. In youth he casteth  
the ball of lechery befoze her, that is to saye, the desyre  
of the fleshe, neuerthelesse for all this ball ostentynes  
man ouercometh the deuyl by confessor, contricion  
and satisfaccyon. The seconde ball is the ball of pryde,  
the whyche the deuyl casteth to man in hys manhode,  
that is to saye, in hys myddle age, but thys ball man  
ostentynes ouercometh as he dyd p̄ sp̄st. But let hym  
beware of the thyrde ball, whyche is p̄ ball of couetyse  
that the deuyl casteth to man in hys olde age, whyche  
is bredesfull. For but p̄ a man may ouercome this ball  
wyth these other two, he shall lese hys honour, that is  
to saye, the kyngdome of heuen. For whan man bren-  
neth in couetyse, he thynketh not on goosly rycheffe,  
for euer his hert is set on woozldly goodes, and recketh  
not of prayers ne of almes dedes, and thus leseth he  
hys heritage, to p̄ whyche god hath bought hym wyth  
hys precyous blode, vnto the whyche our lord Iesu  
Christ bynge bothe p̄ a me & al mankynde. Amen.

**U** Here dwelled somtyme in Rome a myghty Em-  
perour & a wyfe named Anselme, whyche bare  
in his armes a chylde of syluer w̄ fyue reed roses. This  
Emperour had thze sones, whome he loued moche, he  
had

had also contynuall warre wyth the kynge of Egypte,  
in the whyche warre he lost all hys tempozall goodes,  
excepte a vertuous tree. It fortunied after on a daye  
that he gaue batayle to þe sayd kynge of Egypte, wher-  
in he was greuously wounded. Neuerthelesse he optey-  
ned the vyctory, notwithstandinge he had hys deadly  
wounde, wherfore whyle he lay in poynt of deth he cal-  
led vnto hym his eldest sone & sayd. My moost dere and  
welbeloued sone, al my tēporal rychesse I haue spent  
& almoost nothyng is lefte me, except a vertuous tree  
the whyche standeth in the myddes of myne Emprye.  
I gyue to the all that is vnder the erth & aboue þe erth  
of þe same tree. O my reuerens father (quod he) I thanke  
you moche. Than sayde theemperour, call to me my se-  
cond sone. Anone his eldest sone greatly gladdened of his  
fathers gyfte called in hys brother, and whan he came  
than sayd theemperour. My dere sone (quod he) I may  
not make my testament for as moche as I haue spent  
all my goodes, excepte a tree whyche standeth in myne  
Emprye, of the whyche tree I bequethe to the all that  
is greate and small. Than answered he & sayd. My re-  
uerent father I thanke you moche. Than sayd þe Em-  
perour, call to me my thyrde sone, and so it was done.  
And whā he was come, the Emperour sayd. My dere  
sone I must dye of these woundes, & I haue but onely  
a vertuous tree, of the whyche I haue bequethed thy  
bretherne theyr porcyon, and to the I bequethe thy por-  
cyon, for I wyll that thou haue of the sayd tree all that  
is mete & dnye. Than sayde hys sone. Father I thanke  
you. Soone after that þe Emperour had made hys be-  
quest he dyed. And the eldest sone anone toke season of  
the tree. Whan the seconde brother herdethys, he sayde

My brother, by what lawe or tytel occupy ye thys tree.  
Dere brother quod he I occupy it by thys tytel, my fa-  
ther gaue me all that is vnder the erth & aboue of the  
sayd tree, & therfore by reason thys tree is myne. Un-  
knowynge to the quod the seconde brother, he gaue me  
all that is in brede, lengthe & depnes of the sayd tree, &  
therfore I haue as great, right in þ tree as thou. This  
hearyng the thyzde sone came to them & sayd. O ye my  
best beloued bzetherne, it behoueth you not to stryue  
for this tree, for as moche ryght haue I in this tree as  
ye, for well ye wote by þ lawe, that the last wyll & testa-  
ment ought to stande, for sothly he gaue me of the sayd  
tree all that is wete & drye, & therfore by ryght the tree  
is myne, but for as moche as your tales ben grete, &  
myne also, my counseyle is that we be iustfyed by rea-  
son, for it is not good nor comendable that any stryfe or  
dyscencye shold be amonge vs. Here besyde dwelleth a  
kyng of reason, for it is not good to stryue, go we there  
vnto hym, & eueryche of vs laye hys ryght before hym  
and lyke as he wyll iudge, let vs stande to hys iudge-  
ment. Than sayd hys bzetherne, this counseyle is good,  
wherfore they wente all thre vnto the kyng of reason,  
& eueryche of them synghularly shewed forth hys ryght  
vnto hym, lyke as it is sayd before. When þ kyng had  
herde theyz tytels, he rehersed them all agayn synghu-  
larly, fyrst sayenge to the eldest sone, thus. Thou sayst  
for the quod the kyng that thy father gaue the all that  
is vnder the erth & aboue the erth of the sayd tree. And  
to the seconde brother he bequethed all that is in breds  
length & depnes of that tree. And to the thyzde brother  
he gaue all that is wete & drye. And with that he layde  
the lawe for them, and sayd that the last wyll ought to  
stande.

stande. Now my dere sones, breuely I shall satisfie all  
your reasons. And whan he had thus sayde, he turned  
hym vnto þ eldest brother, sayinge thus. My dere sone  
yf the lyst to abyde þ iudgement, of ryght the behoueth  
to be letten blode of the ryght arme. My lord quod he  
your wyll shal be done. Than called the kyng forth a  
dycrete physycyon, comaūdyng hym to let hys blode.  
Whan the eldest sone was thus letten blode, the kyng  
sayd to them all thre. My dere sones quod he where is  
your father buryed. Than answered they & sayde. For  
sothe my lord in suche a place. Anone the kyng comaū  
ded to delue bp the body, and to drawe out a bone of his  
brest, & to bury the body agayne, & so it was done. And  
whan the bone was drawen out, the kyng comaūded  
that it shold be layde in the blode of the elder brother, &  
that it shold lye tyll it had receyued kyndly the blode, &  
than to be layde in þ sonne & dzyed, & after that it shold  
be washten with clere water, hys seruantes fulfylled  
al that he comaūded. And whan they began to washe  
the blode banysshed clene away. Whan the kyng sawe  
this, he sayd to the seconde sone. It behoueth þ thou be  
letten blode as thy brother is. Than sayd he. My lord  
thy wyll shal be fulfylled, & anone he was serued lyke  
as hys brother was in all thyng, & whan they began  
to washe the bone, the blode banysshed awaye. Than  
sayd the kyng to the thyrde sone. My dere chylde it be-  
houeth the also to be letten blode. He answered & sayd.  
My lord it pleaseth me well so to be. Whan þ yongest  
brother was letten blode, & serued in al thyng lyke as  
his two betherne were serued before, whan þ kynges  
seruantes began to washe þ bone, they might neyther  
for waschyng ne for fretyng do away the blode of the  
bone,



bone, but euer it appered bloody. When the kynge sa we  
thys he sayd. It appereth openly þ this blode wythout  
doubte is of the nature of thys bone, thou art hys true  
sone, and these other two ben bastardes, I gyue to the  
that tree for euermore.

**¶** Where frēdes thys Emperour is our lord Iesu chryst  
whyche bare a sheelde of syluer wyth fyue reed roses,  
that is to saye, hys body that is so fayre so clere & more  
radiant than ony syluer, accordyng w psalmist sayinge  
thus. *Spectiosus forma pre filiis hominu.* That is to  
saye, he was more specyall & fayrer of shape than all þ  
chyl dren of men. By these. v. roses we vnderstande hys  
fyue woundes, whyche he suffred for mankynde. And  
by the kynge of Egypte we vnderstande the deuyll, a  
gaynst whome he fought all the tyme of hys lyfe, & at  
the last he was slayne for mākynde. **¶** Neuerthelesse be-  
fore hys deth he made hys testament to hys thre sones.  
By the fyrst to whome he gaue of the tree all that was  
vnder þerth & aboue, we shall vnderstande the myghty  
men & states of thys worlde, to whome he hath gyuen  
power in erth, in water and in ayre, so that they be obe-  
dyent at theyr wyll, & all thyng vnder heuen. By the  
seconde sone to whome he gaue þ tree in lenght, brede  
& depnes, we may vnderstande the wytty men of thys  
worlde, as Iustyces, atturneys and men of lawe, these  
men haue power in lengthe, brede & depnes vpon gen-  
tyl men of myddle degre, and vpon pooze men, them to  
deme & iudge as they lyst. By þ thyrde sone to whome  
he gaue all that was wete & drye of the tree, we shall  
vnderstande good chrysten men, whyche haue & suffre  
bothe wete an drye, that is to saye, now ponerte, now  
trouble, now solace, now care, now cold, now hete, and  
all



all this they receyue of god thankfully to haue this no-  
 ble tree þ was thus bequethed them. Thys tree is the  
 tree of paradyse, þ is to saye, euerlastyng ioye of heuen  
 whyche is gyue to vs all, yf we wyl take it thankfully,  
 neuerthelesse it is heuen in dyuerse wyse, & not egally,  
 for some hath moze, & some hath lesse, after theyr me-  
 rytes, thys notwithstanding euery man opteyneth not,  
 therfoze it behoueth them to go vnto þ kyng of reason,  
 that is to saye, vnto the father of heuen, that knoweth  
 all thyng or they be made. The fyrst sone was let blode  
 and in his blode the bone was wrapped. By this blode  
 we shall vnderstande our merytoryous dedes, & by the  
 whyte & heuy almes dede whych is ful heuy to the that  
 gyue almes, neuerthelesse it maketh the soule whyte,  
 wherfoze whan these myghty men gyue almes, or do  
 a merytoryous dede, though it be made dyre & stablyf-  
 shed wyth the sonne, & by the wynde of dyuine predica-  
 cyon, neuerthelesse whan the water of pryde, enuye,  
 wrath, & suche other, all the merytoryous dedes done  
 before is brought to nought, & the blode, that is to saye  
 the almes dedes by þ whyche they sholde come to euer-  
 lastyng lyfe, begynneth to banyshe awaye. For why  
 as the apostle sayth, he that offendeth in one synne, is  
 gilty in all. Thys blode letter whych let them blode is  
 a discrete confessor, though the myghty men of thys  
 worlde do good dedes & fulfyl theyr penance, neuerthe-  
 lesse whan the water of couetyse, that is to saye, whan  
 the purse is full of money anone they gyue true iudge-  
 ment, agaynst whome it is wyrtten thus. The wyse-  
 dome of this worlde is nothyng els but foly afoze god  
 And agaynst the myghty men of thys worlde speketh  
 holy scrpyture and sayth. Where be those myghty men

gal. Ro.

b. j.

whych

whych were praysed among the byrdes of heuen, eate  
and drynke, and often descended to hell. The thyrde sone  
of thys Emperour is a good chrysten man, whych all  
the tyme of hys lyfe dyd good dedes, & lyued wythout  
pryde, enuy and lechery, from the bone of suche a man  
the blode may not be washen awaye, that is to saye,  
hys merytoryous dedes may not be put away from pe  
naunce, suche a man is y true chyld of god, of whome  
our lord speketh thus. Ye the whych haue forsaken  
all thyng for me, all, that is to saye, ye that haue for-  
saken the wyll of synne, shall receyue an hōdred tymes  
more, that is to saye, ye shall not onely receyue the tree  
of paradysse, but also the heritage of heuen. These two  
other sones ben bastardes, for why, that they behote  
in theyr baptysm they wrought all the contrary thugh  
theyr wycked luyng. And therfore he that desyeth  
to optayne the ioyes of heuen, hym behoueth to abyde  
stedfastly in werkynge of good werkis, and than by  
rea son may he optayne the tree of paradysse, vnto the  
whych that lord byng vs whychelyueth & regneth  
eternally worlde wythouten ende. Amen.

**I**n Rome there dwelled somtyme a noble Emperour  
named Dyoclesia, whych aboue all worlde goodes  
loued the vertue of charyte, wherfore he desyred  
greatly to knowe what fowle loued her byrdes best to  
the entent that he myght therby growe to more perfyte  
charyte. It fortunēd after vpon a daye that thys Em-  
perour walked to the foress to take hys dysporte, where  
as he founde the nest of a great byrde that is called, in la-  
tyn strutio wyth her byrde, the whych byrde the empe-  
rour toke wyth hym, & closed hym in a vessell of glasse.

The

The mother of thys lyttell byrde folowed after vnto þ  
Emperours place, and entred into the hall where her  
byrde was closed. But whan she sawe her byrde and  
myght by no meanes come to her, ne gete her out, she  
returued agayn to þ forest, & there she abode thre dayes  
and at þ last she returued agayne to þ palays, bearyng  
in her mouth a worme that is called thumare. Whan  
she came where her byrde was, she let the worme fall  
vpon þ glasse, thzugh vertue of whyche worme þ glasse  
brake, & the byrde escaped & flew forth to hys mother.  
Whan thempetour sawe thys, he prayled moche þ mo-  
ther of thys byrde, whyche so dyligently laboured for  
the deliuerance of her byrde.

**C**hy frendes thys Emperour is the father of heuē,  
whyche greatly loueth them that ben in perfyte loue &  
charite. Thys lytel byrde closed in the glasse & take fro  
the forest was Adam our forefather, whyche was exi-  
led fro paradys, and put in the glasse, that is to say, in  
hell. Thys bearyng the mother of the byrde, that is to  
wyte, the sone of god descended fro heuen & came to the  
forest of the worlde, and lyued here thre dayes & moze,  
bearyng wyth hym a worme, that is to say, manhode  
accozdyng to the psalmyst, sayinge. Ego sum vermis  
et nō homo. That is to saye, I am a worme & no man.  
Thys manhode was suffred to be slayne amonge the  
iellwes, of whose blode þ vessel eternall was broke, and  
the byrde went out, that is to saye, Adam wente forth  
wyth hys mother the sone of god & flew vnto heuen.

**S**omtyme dwelled in Rome a worthy emperour  
and a wyse, whyche had a fayze doughter and a  
gracypous in the syght of euery man. Thys Emperour  
bethought

bethought hym on a daye to whome he myght gyue  
his doughter in maryage, saying thus. yf I gyue my  
doughter to a ryche man, & he be a foole than is she lost  
and yf I gyue her to a pooze man & a wyty, than may  
he gete hys lyupage for hym and her by his wysdome.  
There was that tyme dwellynge in the cite of Rome a  
phylosopher named Socrates, pooze & wyse, whych  
came to theemperour & sayd. My lord displease you not  
though I put forth my petycyon befoze your hyghnes  
Theemperour sayd, what so euer pleaseth the tell forth  
Than sayde Socrates. My lord ye haue a doughter  
whome I desyre aboue al thyng. Theemperour answe  
red & sayd. My frende I shall gyue the my doughter to  
wyfe vpon thys condicyon, that yf she dye in thy felaw  
shipp after that she be wedded to the, thou shalt wyth  
outen doute lese thy heed. Than sayd Socrates. Upō  
thys condicyon I wyll gladly take her to be my wyfe.  
Theemperour hearyng thys, let call forth all þ lordes &  
states of his Emprye, and made a greate feest at theyr  
weddyng. And after þ feest Socrates ledde home his  
wyfe to hys owne house, where as they lyued in peace  
and helth longe tyme. But at the last thys Emperours  
doughter syckned to deith. When Socrates perceyued  
thys, he sayde to hym selfe. Alas and woo to me, what  
shall I doo, and whether shall I flee, yf theemperours  
doughter that is my wyfe holde dye, & for sorowe this  
Socrates wente to a fozeist there besyde & wepte by  
terly. The whyle he thus wepte & mourned there came  
an aged man bearyng a staffe in hys hande, & asked þ  
cause of Socrates why he mourned. Socrates answe  
red and sayde. I wedded theemperours doughter vpon  
thys cōdicyon, yf she dyed in my felowshipp, I holde  
lese

lese my lyfe, now she is syckened vnto the deth, & I can  
fynde no remedy nor helpe, & therfore I mourne more  
than any creature can thynke. Than sayde the olde mā  
be ye cōforted, for I shall be your helper, yf ye wyll do  
after my counseyle. In this forrest be thre herbes, yf ye  
make a dzyinke of the fyrst to your wyfe, & of the other  
two a plaester, & yf she vse thys medicynall dzyinke and  
plaester in due tyme, wythout doubte she shall recouer  
to perfyte helth. Socrates fulfylled al as the old man  
had taught hym. And whā hys wyfe had vsed a whyle  
that medicynall dzyinke & plaester, wythin thoste tyme  
she was perfyty hole of al her sycknes. And whan the  
Emperoure herde that Socrates wrought so wysely,  
and how dyllygently he laboured for to heale his wyfe  
he promoted hym to great dyngnyte and worshyp.

**C** Dere frēdes this Emperour is our lord Iesu chryst  
hys doughter so fayre & so gracys is the soule, made  
at the similitude of god, whych is full gracys & glo-  
ryous in the syght of hym & of hys aūgels, whyle that  
she is not defouled & abyde in her owne propre clen-  
nesse. Thys soule god wolde not gyue it to a ryche man  
but to a pooze man, that is to say, a man that is made  
of the ashyne of the erth. Thys Socrates is a pooze mā  
for why, euery man cōmeth pooze and naked in to this  
worlde from hys mothers bely, & euery mā taketh hys  
soule in wordlocke vpon suche cōdycyon, that yf she dye  
in hys felawshyp by deedly synne, wythout doubte he  
shall lese eternal lyfe. Therfore o thou man yf thy wyfe  
sycken so through deedly synne, do thā as Socrates dyd  
go vnto the forrest, that is holy chyrche, and thou shalt  
fynde there an olde man with a staffe, that is a discrete  
cōfessor, whyche shall tell the of these thre herbes, for



he hath power to bynde & to vnbynde. The fyrst herbe  
is contricion, of whome thou shouldest make thy drynke  
of teares. Ambrose sayth that teares washet hawaye  
synne, where shame is to knowlege it, and these two  
other herbes ben confessyon and satisfaccyon, yf these  
herbes be vsed in plaester, the synner wythout doubt  
shall receyue his helth, and his soule shall be deliuered  
from synne, and by al ryght he shall haue euerlastyng  
lyfe. Unto the whyche bynne vs our lord Iesus.

**S**omtyme there reigned in Rome a myghty Em-  
perour and a wyse named Frederyke, whyche  
had an onely sone, whome he loved moche. Thys Em-  
perour whan he laye at the poynt of deeth, he called vnto  
hym his sone & sayd. Dere sone I haue a ball of gold  
whyche I gyue the vpon my blessing, that thou anon  
after my deeth shalt gyue it to the moost foole that thou  
mayst fynde. Than sayd hys sone. My lord without  
doubte your wyll shall be fulfilled. Anone thys ponge  
lord after the deeth of hys father went & sought in ma-  
ny realmes & founde many recheles fooles, bycause he  
wolde satisfye hys fathers wyll laboured farther tyll  
he came in to a realme where the lawe was suche, that  
euery yere a newe kyng was chosen there, & thys kyng  
had onely the guydynge of y realme but a yere, & at the  
yeres ende he was deposed & put in exile in an ylande,  
where as he shold wretchedly synysse hys lyfe. Whan  
themperours sone came to thys realme the newe kyng  
was chosen to great honour, & all maner of mynstral-  
sy wente afore hym, & brought hym wyth great reue-  
rence and worshyp vnto hys regall sete. And whan the  
Emperours sone sawe that, he came vnto hym and sa-

lewed



keued hym reuerently & sayd. My lord loo I gyue the  
thys ball of gold on my fathers behalfe. Than sayd he  
I praye the tell me the cause why thou gvest me thys  
ball. Thā answered thys yonge lord and sayd. My fa-  
ther charged me in thys deth bedde vpon payn of forsey-  
tynge of his blesynge, that I holde gyue this ball to y  
moost foole y I coude fynde, wherfore I haue sought  
many realmes, & haue founde many fooles, neuer the-  
lesse a moze foole than thou art founde I neuer, & ther-  
fore thys is the reason. It is not vnknewen to the that  
thou shalt regne but a yere, and at the yeres ende thou  
shalte be exiled into suche a place where as thou shalt  
dye a myscheuous deth, wherfore I holde the for the  
moost foole that euer I founde, that for the lordshipp of  
a yere thou woldest so wylfully lese thy selfe, & therfore  
before all other I haue gyuen to the thys ball of gold.  
Than sayd the kyng, wythout doubte thou sayst sothe  
and therfore whan I am in full power of thys realme  
I shall sende before me greate treasure and rycheesse  
wherwith I may lyue and saue my selfe from mysche-  
uous deth whan I shall be exiled & put downe. And so  
thys was done, wherfore at the yeres ende he was exi-  
led, & lyued there in peace vpon suche goodes as he had  
sent before, and he dyed afterwarde a good deth.

¶ Wete frendes thys Emperour is the father of heuen  
the, whych byquethed the ball, that is to saye, worldly  
rycheesse to fooles and ypottes, whyche fauoureth no  
thyng but that is earthly. This Emperours sone, that  
is to saye, a precher and a discrete cōfessour serched a-  
bout many realmes & landes to shewe to myshylenig  
men & fooles thoyr peryll. The realme wherin no kyng  
myght regne but a yere is this worlde. For who so had  
lyued

lyued an hondzed yere, whan he cometh to the deeth  
hym shall seme that he hath lyued but the space of an  
houre, therfore do as the kyng dyd, whyle that ye be in  
power of lyfe sende befoze you your trea sour, that is to  
say, almes dede & other merytozys dedes, & certayn-  
ly whā ye be put in exile out of thys world, ye shall lyue  
in peace, & shall fynde þ mercy of god plentefull, wher-  
by ye shall optayne euer lastyng lyfe. Unto the whych  
byrnyng vs he, that for vs dyed on the rode tree. Amen.

**D**iolesyan reigned in the cyte of Rome, in whose  
Dempyre dwelled a noble philosopher, þ whych let  
:: bp by hys crafte an ymage in the myddes of þ cite  
of Rome, the whych ymage stretched out hys arine &  
hys forimest fynger, wherbypon stode thys posy wyrtten  
in latyn. Percute hic. Smyte here. Thys ymage after  
the deth of thys philosopher stode styll a longe tyme, &  
many greate clerkes came thyder for to rede the super-  
scripcyon that was on þ fynger, but none of them vnder-  
stode what it mente, wherfore there was greate  
wondryng amonge the people. And at the last a longe  
tyme after there came a straunge clerke out of ferre coun-  
trees, & whan he sawe thys ymage he redde þ scripture  
Smyte here. And than vpon a daye whan he sawe the  
shadowe of the hande, he toke a mattocke & brak bp þ  
grounde vnder the hande where the shadowe was, ac-  
cordyng to the vnderstandyng of the super scripcyon, &  
anone he founde an house al of marble vnderneath the  
grounde, wherin he entred, & came in to a hall, where  
he founde so moche rycheffe, so many yewelles, and so  
great inernayles that he neuer sawe ne herde of suche  
nor so many befoze that tyme. At þ last he sawe a boorde  
couered,

covered, and all maner of thynges necessary therto set  
ther vpon. He behelde farther and sawe a carbuncle in  
a wall that lpghtened all þ hous. And anenst thys car-  
buncle on that other syde stode a man holdynge in hys  
hande a bowe wyth an arrowe redy to shote. The clerke  
merualled moche whan he sawe all these thynges, and  
thought in hymself, yf that I tell thys forth there wyll  
no man beleue me, & therfore I wyll haue somwhat of  
these goodes in token of pzoofe. And wyth that he sawe  
a knyfe of golde vpon þ boorde, whych he toke & wolde  
haue put it in his bosome. But anone the archer smote  
the carbuncle and bzake it, wherwyth all the hole hous  
was shadowed & made darke. And whan þ clerke per-  
ceyued it, he wept moze bytterly than ony man myght  
thynke, for he wyll not by what way he myght go out,  
for as moche as the hous was made darke thzugh the  
bzekynge of the carbuncle. And that darknesse abode  
styll for euermoze after. And so fynished the clerke his  
lyfe there in that darknesse.

**C** Dete frendes thys ymage so standyng is the deuyll  
whych he sayth euermoze. Smyte here. That is to saye  
take hede to erthly rycheffe, & not to heuenly treasour.  
Thys clerke that smote with the mattocke betokeneth  
the wyse men of thys woylde, as pleders of þ lawe, at-  
turneys, and other wooldy men that euer be smytyng  
what by ryght & what by wzonge, so þ they may gete  
the banytees of thys woylde, & in theyz smytynge they  
fynde great wonders & meruayles, that is to say, they  
fynde therein the delytes of the woylde, wherin many  
men reioyseth. The carbuncle that gyueth lyght is the  
youth of man, whych he gyueth hardynes to take theyz  
pleasure in wooldy rycheffe. The archer is hys arrowe

is death, whyche layeth watche anenst man to slee hym.  
The clerke that toke vp þy knyfe is every worldly man  
that weneth ever to haue all thyng at hys wyll. Death  
synneth the carbuncle, that is to saye youth, strength  
and power of man, and than lyeth he wrapped in dark  
nes of synne, in whyche darknes oftentymes he dyeth.  
Therfore study we to slee the worlde and hys desyres,  
and than shall we be sure to wyne everlastyng lyfe,  
vnto the whyche Iesu brynge bothe you & me. Amen.

**I**N Rome dwelled somtyme a myghty Emperoure  
named Tytus, a wyse man & a dyscrete, whyche or  
deyned in his dayes suche a lawe, that what knyght  
died in hys empyre, shoulde be buryed in hys armure, &  
who so ever presumed to spoyle any knyghtes armure  
after he were deed, he shoulde dye wythout any withstand  
dng or ganyng. It befell after within fewe yeres  
that a cite of þe empyre was besyged of the emperours  
ennemyes, wherfore that cite was in peryll of lesyng,  
for none that was wythin that cite myght not defende  
themselve by no maner of crafte, therfore great sorowe  
and lamentacyon was made thugh out all þe cite. But  
at the last within fewe days there came to the cite a yonge  
knyght and a fayne and doughty to do dedes of armes,  
whome the worthy men of the cite beholdyng & vnder  
standyng his doughtynesse, cryed to one boyce. O thou  
most noble knyght, we beseeche the yf it please thy wor  
thyngnesse to helpe vs now at our most nede, for ye may  
se this cite in is peryll of lesyng. Than answered he &  
sayd. Ye ye not fyxe that I haue none armure, & yf I  
had armure I wolde gladly defende your cite. This  
yeryng a myghty man of the cite sayd to hym in se  
crete

reke wyse. Syr here was somtyme a Doughty knyght  
whych he now is deed and buryed within this cite accor-  
dyng to the lawe, & yf it please you to take his armure  
ye myght defende thys cite & deliuer vs fro peryll, and  
that shall be honour vnto you and profyte vnto all the  
emprye. Whan thys yonge knyght had herd thys, he  
wente to the graue & toke þ armure & araped hym selfe  
therwith, & fought myghtyly agaynst hys ennemyes,  
and at the last he opteyned & had the byctory, & deliue-  
red þ cite from peryll. And whan he had so done, he put  
the armure agayne in to the graue. There were some  
men in the cite that had great indignacion and enuy at  
hym, bycause he had opteyned the byctory, and accused  
hym to the iudge, saying thus. Syr a lawe was made  
by thei emperor, þ who so euer despoiled a deed knyght  
of hys armure shoulde dye, thys yonge knyght founde a  
deed knyght & toke away hys armure, therfore we be-  
seche þ that thou procede in the lawe agaynst hym, as  
agaynst hym þ is breker of þ lawe. Whan the Iustyce  
herde this, he made þ knyght to be take & to be brough-  
t a fore him. And whā he was examyned of this trespass  
agaynst the lawe, he sayd thus. Syr it is wyrtē in the  
lawe, that of two harmes the leest is to be chosen, it is  
not vnknownen to you that this cite was in peryll to be  
lost, & but I had taken thys armure I had neyther sa-  
ued you ne the cite, therfore me thynketh ye ought ra-  
ther to honour & woorthyp me for thys good dede that I  
haue done, than thus shamefully to reppreue me, for I  
am ledde as he that is redy to be hāged, and also good  
syys an other reason I may laye for myne excuse. He þ  
steleth or robbeth byolently, purposeth not to resloze þ  
thyng that he robbeth, but it is not thus wyth me, for

c.ij,

though



though I toke the armure of the deed knyght for your  
saluacyon, whan I had opteyned the victoꝝy I bare it  
agayne to þe same place, & so the deed knyght hath that  
is hys by the lawe. Than sayd the Iustyce, a thefe that  
bzeketh a hous that he may stele & bere away suche as  
he may fynde, & though he byrnye agayn that he hath  
taken, I aske of the yf that the bzekyng of the hous be  
lawfull or not. The knyght answered, somtyme the bze  
kyng of an hous may be good, where as it is made in  
feble place, whych sholde cause the lord of the hous to  
make hys wall stronger, that the theues after þe bzeke  
not the walles so lyghtly in auoydying of moze harme.  
Than sayd the Iustyce, yf the bzekyng of the hous be  
good, neuerthelesse in that bzekyng violence is done to  
the lord of the hous. And so though thou dydest good  
wyth the armure of þe deed knyght, neuerthelesse thou  
dydest wꝛonge to the deed knyght in takyng away hys  
armure. The knyght sayd, I haue tolde you how that  
of two harmes the leest is to be chosen, and that harme  
wherethrough great goodnes cometh, ought not to be  
called harme, but it sholde rather be called good. For yf  
that ony hous wythin the cite were on fyre & began to  
brenne, it were moze better to thꝛowe it to the grounde  
and thꝛe or foure houses therby, than they sholde be set  
on fyre, also wherby all þe cyte myght be bꝛente. Ryght  
so, yf the armure of þe deed knyght had not ben taken  
the cyte and ye all had ben lost. And whan the Iustyce  
herde þe answerd so well & so reasonably, he myghte  
gyue no iudgemēt agaynst hym. But the whyche had  
accused thys knyght slewe hym, for whose deeth there  
was great wepyng thꝛough out all the cyte, & hys body  
was wezthpyfully buryed in a newe tombe.

**C**here



**C**here frendes thys Emperour is the father of heuen  
and thys cite is þ world, the whych is besyged of the  
deuyll and deedly synne. And as many as were within  
this cyte, were al in peryl to be lost. This yong knyght  
that came to the cyte, is our lord Jesu Chryst, whyche  
had not the armure of our manhode tyll he went to the  
grau, that is to saye, to the wombe of þ glorious byr-  
gyn Mary: by the annūciacyon of the aungell, sayinge  
The holy goost shall lyght in the. &c. Lo thou shalt con-  
ceyue & bere a sone. And thus in the wombe of the byr-  
gyn he toke the armure of þ deed knyght, that is to say  
he toke the manhode of Adam our foze father, & saued  
the cyte, that is the world wyth mākynde from peryll  
by hys blessed passyon whych he suffred on the crosse, &  
than he put hys armure agayn in to þ graue whan his  
blessed body was buried, but þ cytezyns enuyed hym,  
that is to saye, the iewes of Iury accused hym to Pry-  
late, and layde the lawe agaynst hym, saying. Yf thou  
suffre hym thus, thou arte not the Emperour Cesar's  
frende, we haue a lawe & after þ lawe he ought to dye.  
And thus our lord Jesu Chryst of his ennemys was  
cōdemned to the de th of the crosse, & after ascended by  
to heuen, where our lord Jesu byrynge vs all. Amen.

**T**here regned som tyme in Rome a myghty Em-  
perour and a wysed named Betolde, whych or-  
deyned a lawe, that what woman were taken in anou-  
try her husbāde beynge alyue, she sholde be cast in to  
ppetuall pryson. There was that tyme a knyght that  
had a sayre lady to hys wyfe, whyche dyd anoutry her  
husbāde beynge alyue, & was wyth chylde, therfore  
by þ lawe she was put in pryson, where wythin thowse  
c.iii. tyme

tyme after she was deliuered of a fayre sone. Thys  
chylde grewe vp tyll he was. vij. yere olde, hys mother  
dailly wepte hertely. And whan the chylde herde thys  
he sayd to hys mother. O mother why wepe ye thus,  
& for what cause is your body thus turmented. Than  
sayd hys mother. O thou my swete sone, I haue great  
cause to mourne, and thou also, for aboue our hedes is  
people walkyng, & þe sonne shyneth in clerenes, & great  
solace haue all men þe are aboue vs, & we be here conty-  
nually in suche darknes that I may not se the, ne thou  
me, alas that euer I conceived the. Than sayd þe sone  
suche ioye ne suche lyght as ye speke of sawe I neuer,  
for I was borne here in thys darknes, therfore yf I  
had meate and drynke ynough, here wolde I lyue all  
the dayes of my lyfe, therfore mother wepe ye not, but  
shewe me solace. This lamentacyon that was bytwene  
the mother and the sone, herde the myghty stewart  
that stode abo: theyr hedes, wherof he had great com-  
passio, & wente vnto þe Emperour, & knelyng besought  
hym of hys grace, that the mother and the sone myght  
be deliuered out of pryson. The Emperour as a mercy  
full lord graunted þe they shold be deliuered. Neuerthe-  
lesse yf they trespassed so in tyme to come, they shold be  
punysshed wyth double payne, & after that they were  
deliuered, thys woman ended her lyfe in that cyte.

¶ Dere frendes thys Emperour is the father of heuen  
that made thys lawe that what wedded woman, that  
is to say, what soule that is wedded to our lord & doth  
auoutry, that is to say, deedly synne, shold be cast in þe  
pryson of hell, therfore a synfull soule hath great cause  
to wepe, for she is departed from lyght, that is to saye,  
from the ioyes of heuen. Her sone that desyred meate &  
drynke,

Drynke, ben the myghty men of thys worlde, that saye  
to the prelates of the chyrche & to the prechers y preche  
vnto them the ioyes of heuen, that whyle we may lyue  
and haue all y solace of y worlde, we desyre none other  
heuen. The stewarde that herde theyr lamentacyon is  
our lord Iesu, that knoweth all the preyntees of our  
herthes & contricyon of our synnes, besought the father  
of heuen for vs, that we myght be deliuered from the  
pyson of synne, & that we myght come to everlastyng  
lyfe, to the whyche bynge vs our lord Iesus. Amen.

**S**omtyme in Rome dwelled an Emperoure na-  
med Doinper, whyche aboue all other thynges  
was mercyful. Thys Emperour let crye thugh our al  
hys empyre a great feest, and that pooze & ryche sholde  
come to thys feest. And who so ever came to that feest  
sholde, not onely be well fedde, but also he sholde haue  
great gyftes. Whan the herawde had warned all ma-  
ner of men to comme to thys feest, at y tyme there were  
two pooze men lyenge by the waye, that one was lame  
and that other was blynde. Thys blynde man sayd to  
the lame man. Alas and woo to me & the, how shall we  
do, for theemperour hath let crye a feest, & who so ever  
cometh there shall not onely be well fedde, but also he  
shall haue grete gyftes, and I am blynde, & thou art  
lame, how shall we do. What sayd the lame man to the  
blynde man, I shall tell the good counseyle, yf y wylte  
do after me, thou shalt let for nothyng, I am lame &  
feble & may not go, neuerthelesse I way le, & thou art  
blynde & stronge & mayst not se, take thou me vpon thy  
backe & bere me, and I shall lede the the ryght waye, &  
thus shall we bothe come to theemperours feest. Than  
sayd

sayd the blynde, after thy counseyle let vs do, come on my back and I shall bere the, & thou shalt lede me the ryght waye, & so they dyd that they came bothe to that feest, and receyued greate rewardes & gyftes amonge other men. And thus ended theyr lyues in peace.

**W**ere frendes thys Emperour is our sauour Iesu Chryst, that let erpe a generall feest, that is to saye, the ioyes of heuen, vnto þe whiche ioyes he calleth all man- kynde, & forsaeth no man that wyll come vnto hym. This lame man betokeneth the prelates of the chyrche prechers and confessours that haue nothyng of theyr owne, but lyuen by techyng and almes of other men. And thys blynde man betokeneth the laye men whych knowe not the ryght waye to heuen. It behoueth that the blynde man, that is to saye, the laye men to bere the lame man, that is to saye, the prelates of the chyrche sustentynge & fedynge them wyth the tythyng of almes and other oblacyons, than the prelates be beholden to teche & to enforme vs the waye to heuen, where as we shal not onely haue a feest, but also great rewarde and ioye, vnto the whiche god byrynge vs all. Amen.

**S**omtyme in Rome dwelled an Emperoure na- med Jollyculus, the whiche was ryght wyse, mercyfull & ryghtfull in all hys werkes. Thys Empe- rour buylded in the east a noble cyte, wherein he put all hys treasour & precpous stones & rycheffe to be kepte. Vnto thys cyte the waye was stony & full of bymbles and sharpe thornes, & thre knyghtes were armed redy to fyght wyth them that wolde come to that cyte. Ther fore theemperour ordeyued that who so euer ouercame these knyghtes, sholde entre the cite, & take at his wyll

of

of thempetours treasour: After that thys Emperour  
let make in the north west a cite wherin he ordeyned all  
maner of payne, turmentyng, sorowe & myschefe, to þ  
whyche was a brode waye, full delectable, growynge  
full of roses & fayre lyllys, and in that way were thre  
knyghtes, euer waytynge yf ony man came towarde  
the cyte of the north, to serue hym wyth al maner of de-  
lycates and thynges necessary. And yf it fortunied ony  
man to entre wythin that cyte, the custome was suche  
that the people sholde take & bynde hym handes & fete  
and cast hym in prysen, there to abyde the comynge of  
the Justyce. Whan thys was cryed thzugh out all the  
emprye, there were two knyghtes dwellynge in a cyte  
there besyde, one hyght Ionatas, and he was a wyse  
man, that other hyght Pryrius, & he was a foole, ne-  
uerthelesse there was bytwene them great loue. Thys  
Ionatas sayd to Pryrius. Dere frende there is a com-  
mune crye made thzugh all landes, that thempetoure  
hath made a cyte in the east, wherin he hath put all his  
treasour, & who so euer may entre that cyte, shall take  
of the treasour what hym lyst, therfore my counseyle is  
that we go to þ cyte. Than sayd Pryrius, thy counseyle  
is good, & I desyre to fulfyll it. The wyse knyght sayd  
yf it be so that thou wylte folowe my counseyle, I praye  
the that saythfull frendshipp may cōtynue bytwene vs  
and in token of loue that thou wylt dzynte my blode, &  
I shall dzynte thyne, that none of vs departe ne fayle  
other in this iourney. The folyshe knyght sayd, it plea-  
seth me ryght well all that ye say, wherfore they were  
bothe letten blode, and eueryche of them dranke others  
blode. Whan thys was done they wente forth togyder  
on theyr iourney, and whan they had gone thre dayes



iourneys towarde the cyte, where þe treasour was, they  
came to a place where was two wayes, one was shar-  
pe, stony & full of thornes, that other way was playne  
and fayre and full of swetnes & delytes. Than sayd the  
wyse knyght to hys felowe. Dere frende here be two  
wayes, one sharpe and thorny, neuerthelesse yf we go  
thys waye, we shall come to thys cite that is so ryche, &  
there shall we haue that we desyre. Than sayd thys fo-  
lyshe knyght to hys felowe. I wonder greatly of you  
that ye speke suche thynges, for I wyll rather byleue  
myne eyen than your wordes, I se here openly, & so do  
ye, that here is an harde waye & full of thornes, & as I  
haue herd say, there be thre champyons armed in thys  
waye, redy to fyght agaynst all men that go that waye  
toward the cite of þe east, & therfore I wyll not go that  
waye, but here is (as ye may se) another waye playne  
and easy to walke in, and in thys waye there bea thre  
knyghtes redy to serue vs & gyue vs al maner thynges  
necessary to vs, and therfore by this waye wyll I go, &  
not by that other waye. Than sayde the wyse knyght,  
certaynly yf we go by that way, we shall be ledde in to  
the cyte of the north, wherin there is no mercy, but per-  
petuall payne & sorowe, and there shall we be taken &  
bounde and call in pryson. Certaynly sayd the folyshe  
knyght, thys waye is þe redy waye, & as I byleue it is  
more profytable than þe other waye. Than wente they  
bothe forth þe tayre waye, & anone thre knyghtes mette  
wyth them, whyche receyued them reuerently as for a  
wyght, & gaue them all maner of thyng that was ne-  
cessary to them. And on þe morowe they toke theyr iour-  
ney forth to warde þe cyte. And whan they were wythin  
the cyte, anone the Emperours offycers mette w them  
and



& sayd. Dere frendes why come ye hyther, in so moche  
that ye knowe þ lawe of this cite so cruell of longe time  
here before, sothly ye shall be serued now after þ lawe.  
Anone they toke the wyse knyght and boude hym and  
put hym in pryson, and after that they toke the folysh  
knyght & boude hym fast and kest hym in to a dyche.  
Soone after it befell that the Justyce came to the cite  
to grue iudgement on them that had trespased þ lawe  
and anone all the prysoners were brought forth before  
the Justyce, amonge whome these two knyghtes were  
brought forth, one from pryson, and that other fro the  
dyche. Than sayd the wyse knyght to the Justyce. Re-  
uerende lord I complayne of my felowe that is gilty  
of my deth, for whan we two came to the two wayes  
wherof that one ledde to þ cite in the east, & that other  
to thys cite, I tolde hym all the peryll of this cite, & the  
rewarde of that other cite, & he wolde not byleue me, &  
sayd to me in thys wyse. I byleue myne owne even bet-  
ter than thy wordes, and bycause he was my felowe, I  
wolde not let hym go alone in thys waye, & thus came  
I wyth hym, wherfore he is cause of my deth. Than  
sayd the folysh knyght. I complayne that he is the  
cause of my deth, for it is not vnknownen to you all that  
I am a foole, & he a wyse man, & therfore he shoulde not  
so lyghtly haue folowed my foly, for yf he had forsaken  
thys waye, I wolde haue folowed hym, & therfore he  
is cause of my deth. Than sayd the Justyce to þ wyse  
knyght, bycause that thou wyth all thy wysdome and  
great vnderstandyng so lyghtly consented & folowed the  
wyll of the foole & his folysh werkes, & thou foole by  
cause thou woldest not do after the counseyle ne fulfyll  
the holsome wordes of thys wyse man & byleue hym,

I gyue iudgement that ye be bothe hanged for your  
trespace. And so it was done, wherfoze al men prayesd  
greatly the Justyce for hys dyscrete iudgement.

**W**ere frendes thys emperour is almyghty god, & in  
the east is þe cyte of heuen, wherin is tresour infynite.  
And vnto this cyte is an harde waye & full of thornes,  
that is to saye, the waye of penaunce, by þe whiche waye  
full fewe walketh, for it is harde & strayte, accordynge  
to holy scripture, saying thus. *Est ardua via que ducit  
ad vitam.* It is a strayte way that ledeth to everlastyng  
lyfe. In thys waye ben thre armed knyghtes, that is  
to saye, the deuyll, the woꝛlde, & the fleshe, to whome  
it behoueth vs to fyght, & to optayne the victoꝛy or we  
may come to heuen. The seconde cyte that is in þe north  
is hell. And to thys accordeth scripture, sayinge thus.  
*Ab aquilone pondetur oculus malum.* Out of the north cometh  
all euyl. Certaynly to this cyte is þe waye playne  
& brode, & walled aboute on euery syde wyth all maner  
delycates, wherfoze many men walke by thys waye.  
The thre knyghtes þe gyue to euery man goynge this  
waye what thyng thei nedeth, ben these. Pryde of  
lyfe, couetyse of eyen, & concupyscence of the fleshe, in  
whiche thre the wretched man greatly delyteth, & at þe  
last they lede hym in to hell. Thys wytty knyght beto-  
keneth the soule, & the folysshe knyght betokeneth the  
fleshe, the whiche is alway folysshe, & at all tymes re-  
dy to do euyl. These two be felowes & knytte in one, for  
eueryche of them drynketh others blode, that is to saye  
they shall drynke of one cup, eyther ioye or payne shall  
they haue after the day of dome. The soule choseth the  
waye of penaunce, & in as moche as she may she stereth  
the fleshe to do þe same. But the fleshe thynketh neuer  
what

what shall come after, & therfore the goth in the delyte  
of this worlde, & fleeth the delyte of penaunce. And thus  
the soule after the deth is cast in to hell, & the fleshe is  
cast in to the dyche, that is to saye, in to the graue. But  
than the Iustyce cometh, that is our lord Iesu chryst  
at the day of doome to deme al mankynde. Tha þ soule  
shal complayne vpon the fleshe, & the fleshe vpon the  
soule. But whan þ Iustyce that wyll not be deceyued  
neyther by prayer ne by pryce, shal condempne þ soule  
bycause she folowed þ fraplte of þ fleshe, & also he shal  
condempne the fleshe bycause it wolde not byleue the  
soule, wherfore let vs study to tame our fleshe, that we  
may obey god, and than shal we haue everlastyng lyfe  
vnto the whyche bynge vs our lord Iesus. Amen.

**U**Here dwelled somtyme in Rome a myghty Em-  
perour named frederyke, whyche had no chyl-  
dren saue a doughter, tho whome this Emperour after  
his decease bequethed all hys empyre. Thys vnderstan-  
dyng an erle that dwelte there besyde, came vnto thys  
yonge lady & wolwed her, & stered her to synne all that  
he myght, wherfore thys yonge lady in shorthe processe  
of tyme enclyneh to the erle, & this erle anone lay with  
her & defouled her, & after that he put her fro her heri-  
tage, and chaced her out of her empyre, wherfore she  
made great lamentacyon, & fledde vnto a realme there  
besyde, where as she dayly wept & mourned. It befell  
after on a day that whyle she sate mournyng besyde a  
waye there came rydyng by her a fayre yonge knyght  
vpon a good hors, whyche came towarde her a grea-  
ce pace, & worshypfully salewed her, and asked the cause  
why she mourned so sore. Than answered she & sayd,  
D. iij. My

My reuerend lord, I am an Emperours daughter, com-  
men of a royall kynne, my father is deed whiche lefte  
me all byssemprye, because he had none other heyre, &  
after his decease an erle there besyde deceyved me & toke  
from me my maydenhede, & after that he put me by-  
lētly out of myn herytage, so that now I am fayne to  
begge my breed from doze to doze, & this is the cause of  
my sorowe. Than sayd the knyght, fayre damoyzell I  
haue great cōpassyon on thy beaute and on thy gentyl-  
nes, therfore yf thou wylte graunte me one thyng, I  
shall fyght for the agaynst þe erle, and I schote the the  
victory, Than sayd she, alas alas, I haue nothynge þat  
I may gyue to the but my selfe. And I aske no more of  
the sayd the knyght but that thou woldest be my wyfe  
and loue no man so moche as me. Than sayd she. Reue-  
rende syr that wyl I do gladly, & more yf I myght.  
Than sayd the knyght, I wyl that thou do for me one  
thyng, that yf it fortune me to dye in batayle for the, &  
opteyne the victory, thou shalt take my bloody sherte &  
hange it vpon a perche in thy chambze, and thys shalt  
thou do for two thynges. The fyrst is, þat whan so ener  
thou beholdest the sherte, thou shalt wepe for me. The  
secōde is, that what so ener man comine to wowe the  
to be his wyfe, than shalt thou hastely renne vnto thy  
chambze, & beholde my bloody sherte, & thyuke hertely  
wythin thy selfe thus. The lord of this sherte dyed for  
my loue in batayle, the whiche recovered my herytage  
god forbode that I wolde take any other mā after his  
deeth. Than sayd she. Reuerende syr all thys I shall ful-  
fyll bi the grace of god. And whan þat knyght herde this  
he gaue batayle agaynst the erle & opteyned the victory  
and þe erle was ouercome & slode. And thys yonge la-  
dy

dy was brought & receyued agayne in to her herytage.  
Nenerthelesse thys knyght was deedly wounded in that  
batayle, wherof he dyed, but oz he dyed he bequethed  
hys bloody herte vnto this damoyzell, desyringe her to  
kepe her promette. Whan thys yonge lady herde of his  
deth, she wepte soze & made great lamentaryon for his  
deth. And in hys herte was wyrted this verse. Thynke  
on hym & haue mynde, that to y was so kynde. Anone  
whan she had receyued the herte, she hanged it vpon a  
perche in her chambze, & as oftentymes as she behelde  
it, she wepte bitterly. It befell not longe after that the  
statues of her Empyre came to her & desyred her to take  
a husbande. But than she wente to her chambze & be-  
helde the bloody herte, than wared she sozowfull & sayd  
oftentymes alas alas thou suffred deth for my loue, &  
thou also recouered agayn mynne heritage, god forbede  
that I shold take any other man but the. And thus she  
answered euery man that came to her, & so they wente  
away vnsped, and she ended her lyfe in peace and rest.

**C**here frendes this Emperour is the father of heuen  
and his doughter is the soule of man, made at the simi-  
litude of god, to whome god gaue & bequethed the em-  
pyre of paradysse. But ther came an erle, & is the deny-  
and spyed her to synne, whan she ate of the apple & sayd  
to her thus. In what houre ye ate of y apple, ye shall  
be lyke goddes, wherfore we bzekyng goddes comau-  
ndment we were all exiled out of paradysse, & chased to  
the realme of thys worlde, here to lyue in greute wret-  
chednes, lyke as the psalmyst sayth. In sudore byltust  
tui. &c. In the sweete of thy bylage thou shalt eate thy  
bzeed. But than came a fayre yonge knyght & a stronge  
that is to saye, our lord Iesu Chryst, whych had come  
passyon



passyon vpon mankynde, & toke our flesche & our blode  
and gaue batayle to the deuyl and ouercame hym, and  
thus wanne he agayne our herytage. Therfore let vs  
do as thys ponge lady dyd, put we thys bloody Herte,  
that is to saye, the mynde of þe passyon of Chryst on the  
perche of our hert, and thynke we how our lord Iesu  
Chryst shedd hys precious blode for vs. And yf ony mā  
that is to saye, the deuyl or ony other wolde styre vs to  
synne, anone thynke we on þe passyon of Chryst, & saye  
we thus. I shall take none other but the whyche hast  
shedde thy blode for me, & thus shall we wyne euerlas-  
tyng lyfe. Unto the whyche god byngge vs all. Amen.

**S**omtyme dwelled in Rome a myghty Empe-  
rour named Apolloninus, whyche ordeyned for  
a lawe that euery man vpon payne of deth shoulde woꝝ-  
shipp the day of his natiuite. This Emperour called to  
hym a clerke þe hyght Virgill & sayd. Wy dere mayster  
there be many heed synnes done contrary to the lawe,  
therfore I praye the that thou by thy conynge wolde  
make some craft wherby I myght knowe who trespa-  
ceth agaynst þe lawe pꝛyncely or pertly. Than sayd Vir-  
gill. Wy reuerēde lord your wyll shall be done. Anone  
thys Virgill thꝛugh hys crafte made an ymage in the  
myddes of the cyte of Rome, whyche dysceuered & tolde  
themperours messengers who trespased agaynst the  
lawe, & who not. There was that tyme dwelling in þe  
cyte of Rome a synth that hyght focus, whych for no  
thyng wolde woꝝshipp the natyvyte of the Emperour.  
It befell vpon a nyght as the synth laye in hys bedde  
he thought vpon the ymage that had accused so many  
men before, & dyed lest the ymage wolde accuse hym.  
wherfore

wherefore he rose & went to the ymage & sayd. I make  
a bowe to god yf thou accuse me I shall breke thy heed  
And whan he had thus sayd, he went home. The Em-  
perour on the morowe after folowynge sent hys messen-  
gers to the ymage as he was wont before, to knowe &  
to vnderstande who had trespassed agaynst the lawe.  
And to them than sayd the ymage, lyfte vp your eyen &  
behold what is wyrtten in my foreheed. And than they  
loked vp & sawe thys poley wyrtten. *Tempore mutantur  
homines determinatur.* Tymes ben chaunged, & men  
ben worse & worse. For who wyll save the trowth, shall  
haue his heed broken, therfore go ye forth to your lord  
and tell hym all that ye haue redde & seen. The messen-  
gers wente forth & tolde þe Emperour all that they had  
herde & seen. Than sayd þe Emperour, arme your selfe  
and go to the ymage, & yf that ye fynde ony man that  
hath boasted or thzetened the ymage, bynde hym hande  
and fote & brynge hym to me. Than wente the messen-  
gers forth to þe ymage & sayd vnto it. Tell vs þe trowth  
yf ony mā hath thzetened the, and we shall auenge the  
anone. Than sayd the ymage. Take the smyth focus,  
for he is the man that wyll not honour the natyuite of  
the Emperour. Anone the messengers ledde forth that  
smyth before theperour, & anone examyned hym why  
he kepte not the daye of theemperours natyuite in reue-  
rence & honour accordyng to the lawe. Than answered  
the smyth & sayd. Reuerend lord I beseeche you that ye  
wyl heare myne excuse, & yf I answere not reasonably  
to all maner of poyntes þe ye wyl aske me, I wyl put  
me fully to your grace. Than sayd theemperour, I shall  
heare the, and that that is ryghtfull I shall do. Than  
sayd the smyth. It behoneth me to haue. viij. d . every  
ges. Ro. e. j. day

*Exemplum inquit p[er] hunc b[ea]t[um] d[omi]n[u]m de moribus b[ea]t[um] m[agist]r[u]m  
but our p[er]son is m[agist]r[u]m p[er]sonam*

day in the weke, & that I can not gete wythout greafe labour, & therfore I may in no maner wyse kepe þ day holy day moze than other dayes: Chan sayd the Emperour. Why behoueth it the to haue these. viii. d. Chan sayd þ Smyth. I am boude to pay dayly. ii. d. and. ii. d. I lende and. ii. d. I lese, and. ii. d. I spende. Chan sayd the Emperour. Tell me moze expzessly of these. viii. d. Chan sayd the Smyth. I am bounde euery day to paye ii. d. to my father, for whan I was yonge, my father spent on me. ii. d. dayly, & therfore am I boude to helpe hym, & paye hym agayn hys. ii. d. for hys sustentacyon Also. ii. d. I lese on my wyfe. Chan sayde the Emperour why lesest thou that. ii. d. on thy wyfe. Chan sayd he, where se ye euer woman but she had one of these poyntes, eyther she is wyfull oz contrary to her husbande, oz of hote cōpleccyon, & therfore that I gyue her I lese Also. ii. d. I lende to my sone, wherwyth he is susteyned, that whan I cōme to age & pouerte, that he may paye me agayn. ii. d. lyke as I do to my father. Also I spende. ii. d. on my selfe in meate & dzyne, and that is ytell ynough. Chan sayd the Emperoure, thou hast answered well & wysely. Not longe after it befell that the Emperour dyed, & thys Smyth focus was chosen to be Emperour, bycause he spente hys. viii. d. so wysely & so profytably, & thus he ended hys lyfe in peace and rest.

**C**ete frendes thys Emperour is our blessed sauour Iesu Chryst, whych ordeyned by hys holy lawe þ euery man holde worþypp the sondaye. This Virgil that made thys ymage, is the holy goost, whych is set by amonge vs, a pzecher to tethe vertues, & to repzeue vices, & that he sholde not spare the pooze ne þ ryche. But now yf a pzecher wolde saye trouth agaynst ouy man, anone

anone he shall be thzetened of the ennempes of Chryst,  
that is to saye, by euill men that neyther loue god nor  
man, wherfore the precher may saye now a dayes  
that posey whyche was wyrtten in the fore heed of the  
ymage. Tymes ben chaunged from good to yll, & men  
ben dayly worse and worse. For who so wolde saye the  
trewth now a dayes, shall haue his heed broken. Ther  
fore it is nede they be armed, that is to say, that euery  
precher be armed w good dedes in ensample of other, &  
than it nedeth not to drede, in so moche that they haue  
god & trewth to stāde by them, accor dyng to p apostles  
sayenge. Si deus nobiscū: quis contra nos. If god be  
wyth vs. who may be agaynst vs. By thys smyth fo-  
cus is vnderstande euery good chrysten man, whyche  
dayly holde werke merytoryous dedes, & than ought  
he to be presented befoze the heuenly Emperour. Thys  
Focus payde. ii. d. to hys father, & so we holde paye to  
our father of heuen. ii. d. that is to saye, honour & loue.  
For whan we were the chyldzen of wretchednes & put  
in bondage, almyghty god sente downe to the erth hys  
sone to redeme vs, accor dyng to saynt Iohn the euan-  
gelyst, sayenge. Deus dilexit mundū vt filiū suū vni-  
genitū daret pro mundo. God loueth the worlde so well  
that he wolde gve hys onely sone for the saluacyon of  
the worlde. Also this Focus lente. ii. d. to his sone, that  
is to saye, euery chrysten man ought to lende to p sone  
of god our lord Chryst Iesu good wyll & merytoryous  
dedes in our lyfe, that the may paye vs agayn at p day  
of dome, whan soule & body shal be glorified, & in that  
he is our brother, & it may well be proued by p terte of  
Claie, saying thus. Quer natus est nobis. &c. A chyld  
is bozne to vs, This Focus lost. ii. d. on hys wyfe. Thy  
e. li. wyfe

wyfe betokeneth thy flesche, vpon whom thou hast lost  
ij. d. that is to saye, vnlawfull loue & consent to synne,  
for why, the flesche is contrary to þe goost, & euer is redy  
to harne. Thys focus also spente. ij. d. on hym selfe, þe  
is to saye, by þe fyrst peny ye shall vnderstande penaunce  
done, in whyrche the soule greatly delyteth in heuē, and  
there is gloryfied. And by the seconde peny we ought  
to vnderstande the stedfast abydyng in doyng of pe-  
naunce, for he that abydeth vnto the ende, shall be sa-  
ued. And who that spendeth well these two pens, shall  
optayne euerlastyng lyfe. Vnto the whyrch byyng be  
our lord Iesu Chryst. Amen.

**S**omtyme in Rome dwelled a noble Emperour  
whyrche among all other vertues loued best mer-  
cy, wherfore he ordeyned a lawe that euery blynde man  
sholde haue an hondred shyllinges by yere of hys trea-  
sour. It befell on a daye that there came certayne men  
to a tauerne to drynke wyne, & after that these men had  
syttyn in the tauerne thre dayes, the fourth daye they  
were greatly in the tauerne's dette, and had no money  
to paye for theyr wyne, wherfore the tauerne came to  
them & charged them þe they sholde not boyde tyll they  
had payde for theyr wyne. Thā sayd one of þe drynkers  
to hys felowes. Syt's quod he, the emperour hath made  
suche a lawe that euery blynde man shall haue an hon-  
dred shyllinges of his treasure, therfore let vs cast lot-  
tes amonge vs, & to whom the lot falleth, let hys eyen  
be put out, and so may he go to the emperours palays &  
gete an hondred shyllinges. And this greatly reioysed  
them, & sayd that the counseyle was ryght good, wher-  
fore they cast lottes amonge them, & the lot fell on hym  
that



that gaue the counseyle, & than hys felowes forthwith  
put out hys epen. And whan he was blynde, he wente  
to themperours palays, & asked of y<sup>e</sup> steward an hon-  
dred thyllinges, accor dyng to theperours lawe. Dere  
frende sayd the steward, thou myghtest se wyth bothe  
thyne epen yester day, & thou also vnderstandest y<sup>e</sup> lawe  
amys, for y<sup>e</sup> lawe is made for men y<sup>e</sup> are blynde thzugh  
infirmytees, or by y<sup>e</sup> wyll of god, & yester day y<sup>e</sup> haddest  
thy syght in the tauerne, but wyllfully y<sup>e</sup> hast lost thyne  
epen, therfore go y<sup>e</sup> to the tauerne agayn to thy felowes  
& make thy peace & quyte thy selfe, for here getest thou  
not a farthyng. Than went this wretched man forth &  
tolde hys felowes of y<sup>e</sup> stewardes answere, & wyth that  
came in y<sup>e</sup> tauerner & despoyled them of al theyr clothes  
and bette them, & thus droue them w<sup>th</sup> shame out of the  
cyte, and so were they neuer sene ther after.

**C**Dere frendes thys emperour is our sauour Chryst  
whych ordeyned for a lawe y<sup>e</sup> euery blynde man sholde  
haue an hondred thyllinges of his treasour. This blinde  
man betokeneth euery synner, whyche synneth thzugh  
infirmytees, or entysyng of the deuyl, the woilde & the  
flesche, whyche shall receyue an hondred thyllinges, yf  
he be inwardly repentaunt of hys synnes, that is to saye  
he shall haue an hondred tymes moze ioye, accor dyng  
to scripture, saying thus. Centuplū accipietis et bitā  
eternā possidebitis. Ye shall receyue an hondred tymes  
moze ioye, yf ye be repentaunt & turne frō synne, & also  
ye shal haue euerlastyng lyfe. These men that came to  
the tauerne & dranke the wyne, be synners, whyche of-  
fentymes come to y<sup>e</sup> tauerne of our aduersary y<sup>e</sup> deuyl  
and dzyinke, that is to say, they there consume & waste  
away al goosly vertues, whyche they receyued whan  
e. iij. they

they toke chryſtendom at þ̄ font ſtone, wherfore þ̄ deuyl  
our enemy deſpoyleth them & maketh them to leſe all  
theyꝝ good dedes þ̄ ener they wꝛought befoze they caſt  
loſſes, that is to ſay, the caſt amonge them þ̄ cuſtome  
of ſynne, & this lot of ſinne falleth on them that is woꝝ  
thypfull & wythout inercy, & ſuche a man wyllfully be-  
cometh blynde, that is to ſaye, he becometh wyllfully a  
foule ſynner, lyke Judas that betrayed our lord wout  
ony ſuggeſtyon oz entyſing, & therfore ſuche men ſynne  
more greuouſly whan they come befoze the ſcwarde,  
that is to ſaye, befoze the pꝛelates of the chꝛyche, they  
may not lyghtly optayne the ioyes of heuen, for why,  
they be not in þ̄ ryght waye to leue theyꝝ ſynne. Ther-  
fore ſtudy we wyth all our diligence to pleaſe god, that  
we may optayne euerlaſtyng rewarde. Unto þ̄ whych  
byynge vs our lord Jeſus. Amen.

**I**n Rome dwelled ſomtyne a myghty Emperoure  
named Pylomyus, whyche had onely a doughter &  
fayze damoyſel & a gracious in þ̄ ſyght of euery mā  
and was named Aglaes. There was alſo in the empe-  
rours palays a gētyll knyght þ̄ loued thys lady aboue  
all thyng in þ̄ woꝛlde. It befell after vpon a daye that  
thys knyght talked wyth thys lady, & vttered in ſecrete  
woyle hys deſyre to her. Thā ſayd ſhe curteply, ſyth ye  
haue vttered to me the pꝛeuptyes of your herte, I ſhall  
in lyke woyle for your loue vtter to you þ̄ ſecretes of my  
hert, & truly I ſay that aboue all other I loue you beſt.  
Than ſayd þ̄ knyght, I purpoſe to viſyte þ̄ holy lande,  
& therfore gyue me your tꝛouth, that thys. viij. yere ye  
ſhal take none other man, but onely for my loue to ſarpe  
me ſo longe, and yf I come not agayne to this day. viij.  
yere,

vere, take thā what man ye lyke best. And in lyke wyse  
I shall promyse you that wythin thys. vii. vere I shall  
take no wyse. Than sayd she, thys couenaunt pleaseth  
me well. Whan thys was sayd, eueryche of them be-  
trouthed other, & thā this knyght toke hys leue of this  
lady & went forth to the holy lande. A none after that þ  
Emperour treated wyth the kyng of Hungary of ma-  
ryage for hys doughter. Than came the kyng of Hun-  
gary to the imperours palays to se his doughter, & whā  
he had seen her, he lyked meruaylously wel her beaute  
and her goodnes, so that the imperour & the kyng were  
accor ded in all thynges as touchyng þ maryage, vpon  
the condicyon that the damoyzell wolde consent. Than  
called the imperour the yonge lady to hym & sayd. O my  
fayre doughter I haue prouyded for the þ a kyng shall  
be thy husbande, yf the lyst to assent, therfore tell me  
what answer thou wylte gyue to thys. Than sayd she  
to her father, it pleaseth me well, but of one thyng dere  
father I you beseeche yf it myght please yon to graunt  
me for þ loue of god, I haue auowed my chastite onely  
to god for thys. vii. vere, therfore dere father I beseeche  
you for al the loue þ is bytwene your gracys father-  
hode & me, that ye name no man to be my husband tyll  
these. vii. vere be ended, and than I shall be redy in all  
thynges to fulfyll your wyll. Than sayd the imperour,  
syth it is so that thou wylt no husband haue these. vii.  
vere, I wyl not breke thy bowe, but whā the. vii. vere  
ben passed, thou shalt haue þ kyng of Hungary to thy  
husbande. And than the imperour sent forth hys lettres  
to þ kyng of Hungary, prayyng hym yf it myght please  
hym to abyde. vii. vere for þ loue of his doughter, & thā  
holde he spede of his entent without fayle. Hereof the  
kyng

kyng was pleased, and graūted to abyde. And whan  
these vij. yere were ended saue a daye, the yonge lady  
rode in her chambze wyndowe & wepte soze, sayinge  
thus. Alas alas as to morowe my loue promysed to be  
wyth me agayne fro the holy lande, & also the kyng of  
Hungary to morowe wyll be here for to wedde me, ac-  
cording for my fathers promyse, & yf my loue come not  
at a certayne houre, than am I bitterly deceyued of the  
inwarde loue of hym. Whan the daye came, the kyng  
arayed hym towarde the imperour w a great company  
to wedde hys daughter, & was royally besene & arayed  
in purple. And whyle þ kyng was ryding on hys way  
there came a knyght soderly ryding bi hym, to whom  
he sayd thus. Dere frende whens arte thou, & whens  
comest thou. The knyght answered and sayd, I am of  
thempyre of Rome, and now am come late fro the holy  
lande, & am redy to do your seruyce suche as I cā. And  
as they rode talkyng by the waye, it began to rayne so  
fast, that all the kynges aray was almoost loost. Than  
sayd þ knyght. My lord quod he, ye haue done folysh-  
ly, for as moche as ye bzought not w you your hous,  
Than sayd the kyng, how spekest thou so, my hous is  
large & bzode & made of stones & moztar, how holde I  
than beare wyth me my hous, thou spekest to me lyke a  
foole. Whan thys was sayd they rode farther tyll they  
came to a great water and a depe, the kyng smote hys  
hors wyth hys spures & lepte in to þ water, so that he  
was almoost drowned. Whan the knyght sawe thys, &  
was ouer on that other syde of the water want peryll,  
he sayd to þ kyng. Ye were in peryll, & therfore ye dyd  
folyshly bycause ye bzought not wyth you your byrde.  
Than sayd the kyng, thou spekest meruaylously, my  
byrde

brydge is made of tyme & stone, & cōteyneth in quantite  
moze than halfe a myle, how sholde I than beare with  
me my brydge, therfore þ spekest folyschly. Well sayde  
the knyght, my folyschness may turne the to wysdome.  
Whan the kyng had rydden a lyttell farther, he asked þ  
knyght what tyme of the daye it was. Than sayd the  
knyght, yf ony man haue lust to eate, it is tyme of the  
daye to eate, & therfore my reuerent lorde I praye you  
to take a sop wyth me, for that is no disworshipp to you  
but great honour to me before þ states of this Emprye.  
Than sayd þ kyng, I wyll gladly eate with the. They  
sate bothe downe in a byne gardyn, & all þ were wyth  
the kyng & wyth the knyght dined. And whan dyner  
was done & that þ kyng had waschen, the knyght sayd  
to the kyng. My lorde quod he, ye haue done folyschly  
for that ye ledde not w you your father & your mother.  
Than sayd the kyng, what sayst þ, my father is deed,  
and my mother is olde & may not trauayle, how sholde  
I than brynge them wyth me, therfore to the I saye þ  
trouth, a folyscher man than thou arte save I neuer.  
Than sayd the knyght, euery werke is prayled at the  
ende. Whan þ kyng had rydden a lyttell farther, & was  
ny hande themperours palays, the knyght asked leue  
to go from hym, for thys cause he knewe a nerer waye  
to the palays to the yongelady, þ he myght cōme fyrst  
and lede her wyth hym. Than sayd the kyng, I praye  
the syt tell me by what place purposelt thou to ryde.  
Than sayd þ knyght, I shall tell you trouth, this daye  
vii. yere I leste a nette in a place, & now I purpose to  
byspe it & drawe it to me, & yf it be broken I wyll leue  
it, & yf it be hole than wyl I take it to me, & kepe it as a  
precyous iewel, and whan he had sayd what hym lyst



he toke hys leue of the kyng & rode forth, and the kyng  
kepte the brode hye waye. Whan theemperour herde of  
the kynges comynge, he went agaynst hym w<sup>th</sup> a great  
company, & woꝛthyfully receyued hym, & let do of his  
wete clothes, & arayed hym agayn w<sup>th</sup> newe clothes.  
And whan theemperour & the kyng were set to meate  
theemperour dyd hym all p<sup>er</sup> chere & solace that he coude.  
And whā they had dyned theemperour asked tydynges  
of the kyng. My lordē sayd he, I shall tell you what I  
herde thys day by p<sup>er</sup> waye. There came a knyght to me  
& reuerently salwed me, & anon after that thercame  
a great raine, & cōfounded greatly my clothing, & anon  
the knyght sayd, syz p<sup>er</sup> hast done folyshly, for so moche  
thou brought not w<sup>th</sup> the thy hous. Than sayd theempe-  
rour, what clothing had p<sup>er</sup> knight on him. A cloke quod  
the kyng. Than sayd theemperour, for sothe that was  
a wyse man, for the hous wherof he spake was a cloke  
& therfore he sayd to you that ye dyd folyshly bycause  
ye came w<sup>th</sup>out your cloke, for yf ye had brought w<sup>th</sup> you  
a cloke, thā had not your clothes ben defouled w<sup>th</sup> the  
rayne. Than sayd p<sup>er</sup> kyng, whan we had rydden a lytel  
farther, we came to a depe water, I smote my hors w<sup>th</sup>  
the spures & almost I was drowned, & he rode on the  
other syde of the water & founde no peryll, & than sayd  
he to me, ye haue done folyshly, for so moche p<sup>er</sup> ye ledde  
not w<sup>th</sup> you your byrde. For sothe sayd theemperour  
he sayd trouth, for he called the byrde your squyers, p<sup>er</sup>  
holde haue rydden before & assayed the depnes of p<sup>er</sup> wa-  
ter. Than sayd the kyng, we rode farther, & at the last  
he prayed me to dyne w<sup>th</sup> hym, & whan we had dyned  
he sayd I dyd unwysely, for I ledde not w<sup>th</sup> me my fa-  
ther & my mother. Sothly sayde theemperour he was a  
wyse

wyse man & sayd trouth, for he called your father & mother byreed & wyne & other bytayles. Than sayd þe kyng we rode farther, and anon after he asked me leue to go frome, & I asked dyligently whether he went. And he answered agayn & sayd. Thys daye. vii. yere. I leste a nette in a preuy place, & now I wyll ryde to ppyte it, & yf it be broken or tozre, thā wyll I leue it, & yf it be hole as I leste it, than shall it be to me ryght precyous, & I shall beare it wyth me. Whan the emperor herde thys he cryed with a lowde voyce & sayd. O ye my knyghtes and my seruauntes, go ye lyghtly vnto my daughters chambze, for sothly that is the nette wherof þe knyght spake. And aroue hys knyghtes and hys seruauntes wente vnto hys daughters chambze & founde her not, theforesayd knyght had take her with hym. And thus the kyng was deceptued of the damoyzell, and he went home agayne to hys owne countree confounded.

¶ Dere frēdes this emperor is our lord Iesu Chryst and hys fayre daughter is everlastyng lyfe, the whych theperour had ordeyned for kynges, knyghtes & other men. The knyght that loued thys yonge lady, is every good chryste soule, whiche holdeth hymselfe not worthy to come in the syght of god vnto suche ioye as þe apostle sayth. Non est condigne passionis hui⁹ tēporis ad futurā gloriā. They be not so worthy of suffryng to come vnto the glozy that is to come. Thys knyght went. vii. yere on pylgrymage, lyke as a good chrysten man al þe dayes of his lyfe sholde labour & trauaile i fulfylling the. vii. werkes of mercy. By thys kynge þe came wout a cloke in the rayne, is to vnderstande the myghty men of this worlde as Justices, Mayres & Barlyes, that haue no clothes to couer all theyr other clothes. By this

cloke is vnderstaude charite, as the apostle sayth. *Charitas cooperit multitudinē peccatorū.* Charite couereth al out synnes. But many men haue not thys cloke, wherfore they be wete in þe rayne of pryde, auarice & lechery. This kynge also was almost browned, bycause he lacked hys byrdege, that is to say, perfyte fayth. For we se dayly that there may no man passe ouer a great water byrde & depe wythout a byrdege, or some other thyng þe is able to beare hym. Ryght so wythout fayth it is impossible to please god. And thus may no man be saued wythout fayth whan they set theyr lyfe in worldly loye or worldly helpe, more than in the helpe of god, whych he is mighty to do al thynges, wherfore he sayth hymselfe thus. *Saluator si habueritis fidē sicut granū sinapis poteritis.* &c. If ye haue fayth as þe grayne of mustarde than may ye saye to þe hylles, go thou forth & it shall go. But many of vs now a dayes hath ouer feble fayth, & therfore they shall sodenly fall in the claye of desperacyon, & by dedly synne oftentymes they offende god. Also thys kynge had not brought with hym his father and hys mother. By the father whych is cause of generation is vnderstaude humylite, wythout whome there is no vertue in no mā. And therto accordeth saynt Gregoꝝ, sayinge thus. *Si q̄s ceteris virtutes sine humilitate congregat.* &c. He that gadereth al other vertues wythout humilite, is lyke a man that casteth dust in þe wynde. Hys mother betokeneth hope, therfore he that wyll optayne everlasting lyfe, hym behoueth to haue the cloke of charite, byrdege of fayth, a father of mekenes, & a mother of hope, as þe apostle sayth. *Spe saluti facti sumus.* Also thys knyght wente the strypte path waye, & the kynge the byrde waye. For he that wyll be saued

saued behoueth to go a strapte waye, that is to say, the waye of fastynge, almes dedes, chastyte & penaunce. Of the whyche waye speketh the apostle. *Stricta est via que ducit ad vitam eternam*. The waye is strapte & ledeth to everlastyng lyfe. But many men go that other way whyche ledeth to hell, that is to say, by þ waye of fleschly lust, & suche men ben gone out of the waye of everlastyng lyfe, but suche men be deceyved thurgh þ waye. Therfore study we to walke that waye, wherby we may optayne everlastyng lyfe. Amen.

**S**omtyme dwelled in Rome a noble Emperour named Agvas, whyche had with hym a knyght called Gerarde, whyche was a doughty warryour, neuerthelesse he was as meke as a lambe in the Emperours hall, but in þ felde he was lyke a lyon. Thys Emperour had a fayre doughter, whome the stronge and myghty erle of palester rauysshed & defouled, neuerthelesse it displeased moze theemperour þ defoulyng of his doughter than the rauyschyng, wherfore he called vnto hym his counseyle & sayd, Dere frendes it is not vnknewen to you the despyte & violence done to me in defoulyng of my doughter, & therfore I purpose to gyue batayle to the erle, wherfore I praye you to be redy at a daye set to procede with me in batayle. And they sayd lord we be redy to lyue & dye w you in batayle. Whan the daye of batayle came, they mette on bothe sydes, & a cruell harde batayle was gyuen on bothe sydes, & all that were of theemperours party were slayne. And as theemperour holde haue ben byheded, the knyght Gerarde put hymselfe amonge hys ennemyes before thepourt & fought manfully, & so theemperour escaped, and  
f. iij. the

the knyght abode and slewe the erle. neuerthelesse thys  
knyght had dyuerse woundes. This not withstanding  
he abode & fought styl tyl the blode ranne down to hys  
heles. And whan hys ennemyes sawe that y<sup>e</sup> erle was  
slayne, they fledde, and the knyght wyth hys people fo-  
llowed on y<sup>e</sup> chace tyll he came to y<sup>e</sup> place where the empe-  
rours doughter was, & ledd<sup>e</sup> her wyth hym. And thus  
wyth triumphe & victo<sup>ry</sup> he returned agayn to the empe-  
rour. For y<sup>e</sup> whiche victo<sup>ry</sup> & getyng agayne of the empe-  
rours doughter he was greatly praysed of all people.  
Not longe after it befell that thys knyght had to do in  
theemperours courte, wherfoze the knyght came vnto  
theemperour & prayed hym mekely to be fauourable in  
hys cause, & farthermoze he prayed hym to do y<sup>e</sup> rayson  
asked. Whan theemperour had herde hym, he called to  
hym a iustyce and sayd. So thou and do iustyce to thys  
knyght, & that that the lawe wyll. And whan y<sup>e</sup> knyght  
herde thys, he cryed w<sup>ith</sup> a lowde voyce. Alas alas who  
herde euer suche a thyng of an Emperour, thou were  
sayd he in batayle where thy heed shold haue ben smyt-  
ten of, and I in myne owne persone & none other men  
put mi selfe in leopardy for the & saued the, & now thou  
hast assigned an other mā to be iudge in my cause, alas  
that euer y<sup>e</sup> were bozne. And wyth y<sup>e</sup> woorde the knyght  
dyd of all hys clothes, & shewed y<sup>e</sup> woundes that he had  
receyued in the batayle vnto all y<sup>e</sup> men that were there  
present, & sayd. Lo what I haue suffred for the, and I  
put none other man in my stede, & now thou assignest  
an other man in my cause. Forsothe I sare to y<sup>e</sup> that I  
neuer serued suche a lozde befoze. Whan theemperour  
herde thys, beyng almoost cōfounded in hymselfe sayd  
thus. O dere frende all that thou sayth is trowth, thou  
saued



fauled me fro deth, thou wourest my doughter agayne  
and for my sake þ hast suffred many woundes. For sothe  
it is ryght that I comme downe & make an ende of thy  
cause, suche as may be honour & ioye to the. And than  
themperour laboured besyly in thys mater, and made  
therof an ende accordyng to þ knyghtes entent, wher-  
fore all men greatly comended the Emperour.

**C**Were frendes thys Emperoure may be called euery  
chrysten man, or else al mankynde, whyche had a fayre  
doughter, that is to saye, the soule made to the symily-  
tude of god. Thys erle betokeneth þ deuyll, whyche ra-  
uysshed and defouled by synne the soule of man thzugh  
eatyng of the fruyte of þ tree knowynge godd & euyl,  
wherfore al mankynde was in seruage tyll a stronge &  
valyaunt knyght came & put hymselfe on the crosse by  
twene the deuyll & mankynde. For yf that had not ben  
we had all ben dampned euerlastyngly, & thys knyght  
brought agayn the soule of man vnto þ chyrche, wher-  
fore he suffred many great woundes in hys body. And  
now thys knyght, that is to say, our lord Iesu Chryst  
hath a mater to do amonge vs, that is to saye, to fynde  
in vs perfyte lyfe, wherfore he calleth on vs dayly that  
we holde beredy at all tymes, saying thus in the apo-  
calipse. iii. Ecce sto ad hostium et pulso: si qs mhi apa-  
ruerit introibo et cenabo. That is to saye. Lo I stande  
and knocke at the doze, yf ony man wyll open to me I  
shall come in & soupe wyth hym. But many men dothe  
as thys Emperour dyd, the whyche gaue þ knyght an  
other iudge than hymselfe. But now a dayes there ben  
some men that wyll do no penaunce for the loue of hym,  
whyche assygned no man but hymselfe to fyght for vs.  
And therfore agaynst unkynde me it shal be sayd thus  
Lo

Lo he hangeth on þe crosse despoyled of all his clothyng  
and sheweth to vs all hys woundes þe he suffred for vs.  
Be we therfore kynde, that we may suffre for hys loue  
some penaunce, and that at the daye of dome we may  
saye thus. Haue we not done penaunce in our lyfe. for  
he that suffreth payne for the loue of god, shall receyue  
an hondred tymes more rewarde, and also he shall o-  
payne euerlastyng lyfe, vnto the whyche byyng bothe  
you and me and all mankynde. Amen.

**U** Here dwelled somtyme in Rome a wytty Empe-  
rour named Nōpey, whyche had a fayre dought-  
ter called Aglas. Thys doughter had many vertues a-  
boue all other women of that Emppye. fyrst she was  
fayre & gracypus in the syght of euery man. She was  
also swyfte in rennyng, that no man myght ouertake  
her by a great space. Whan the Emperour vnderstode  
these two vertues in hys doughter, he was ryght ioy-  
full, wherfore he made to proclayme thzugh out al hys  
Emppye, that what man pooze or ryche wolde renne  
wyth hys doughter, shold haue her to wyfe wyth great  
ryches, yf he myght ouerrenne her & come sooner to þe  
marke than she, & yf she ouerrenne hym & come sooner  
to the marke than he, hys heed sholde be smytten of.  
Whan the states of þe emppye, as dukes, erles, barons  
and knyghtes herd this crye, they offred them selfe one  
after an other to renne w her, but euer this yonge lady  
ouer ranne them al, wherfore they lost theyr heedes ac-  
cordinge to þe lawe. That tyme there was a pooze man  
dwellynge in Rome, whyche thought within hym selfe  
I am a pooze man and come of pooze kynrede, there is  
made a comune crye, y what man so euer myght ouer-  
renne

renne the Emperours daughter by any wyse, holde be  
promoted to greate honour and rycheſſe, therfoze yf I  
myght ouercome her by any maner waye, I ſhold not  
onely be p̄moted to great honour but alſo al my kynne  
Thys pooze man prauyded hymſelfe of thre Jewelles,  
wherby he myght wynn her. fyrſt he made a garlād  
of reed roſes and of whyte. Secondly he made a ſayze  
gyrdell of ſylke craſtely wꝛought. Thyrddly he made a  
purſe of ſylke ſet full of pꝛecyous ſtones, & wythin the  
purſe was a ball of thre colours, and vpon thys purſe  
was wꝛytē thys poſey, who playeth w me, ſhall neuer  
be wery of my playe. Than puthe theſe thre thynges  
in hys boſome, & went forth to þ palays gate expenſe &  
ſayinge. Come forth ſayze lady comme forth, for I am  
redy to renne wyth you & fulfyll þ lawe in all thynges.  
Whan the mperour herd this, he comāded his doughter  
to renne wyth hym. Thys yongelady wente to her  
chambr wyndowe, & whan ſhe ſawe hym, ſhe deſpyſed  
hym, and ſayd. I haue ouercomen ſayde ſhe many  
woꝛthy knyghtes, & now muſt I renne wyth a choyle,  
neuertheleſſe I ſhall fulfyll my fathers comādemēt  
None the damoyſel arayed her for to renne wyth hym  
And at þ laſt they ranne togyder, & within ſhozte ſpace  
the damayſell wente ferre afore hym. Whan thys iugler  
ſawe thys, he thꝛewe forth the garlande of floures  
befoze her. And whan þ damoyſell behelde & ſawe that  
ſhe ſtouped downe & toke it vp, & ſet it vpon her heed, &  
that whyle the iugler went afore her. And whan thys  
yonge damoyſel ſawe this, ſhe wepte ſoze, & for ſozowe  
ſhe thꝛewe þ garlande in a dyche & ranne after hym dy-  
lygently, & at the laſt ouertoke hym, & lyft vp her ryght  
hande & gaue hym a buſſet, ſaying to hym thus, Abye  
geſ, Ro, g. j. thou

thou wretche, it becometh not thy fathers sone to haue  
me to hys wyfe. And this ponge lady went befoze hym  
a great space. And whan the iugler sawe thys, he toke  
out the gyrdel of his bosom & threwe it befoze her. And  
whan she sawe that, lyghtly she strouped downe & toke  
it vp & auoune gyrdle her therwyth, and than the iugler  
wente agayne befoze her. And whan she sawe that, she  
made greate lamentacyon, & toke the gyrdell wyth her  
tethe & tare it in thre peces, & than threwe it from her,  
and than she ranne fast after hym. & at y last ouertoke  
hym, & than she toke vp her hande & gaue hym a great  
blowe, saying these wordes. O wretche, weneſt thou to  
ouercome me, & woth that she ranne befoze hym a great  
space. The iugler was slye & subtyll, & abode tyll that  
she was almoost at the marke, & than he threwe forth  
befoze her the purse. And whan she sawe thys purse,  
anon she strouped downe & toke it vp, and opened it, &  
founde the ball, and redde the posey, who playeth wyth  
me, shall neuer be wery of my playe. And than began  
she to playe, and so longe she contynued in playinge tyll  
that the iugler was befoze her at the marke. And thus  
he wanne the Emperours daughter.

**¶** Were frendes thys emperour is our sayour Chryst  
and hys sayre daughter is mannes soule, whyche was  
made cleane wyth the water of the holy font, & was also  
full lyght to renne, that is to say, in vertue whyle that  
she is in clenness, so y no deedly synne myght ouercome  
her. Thys iugler that is come of so whyle blode, is the  
deuyll, the whyche standeth day & nyght to deceyue in-  
nocētes. He prouydeth hym of thre thynges. First of y  
garlande whych betokeneth pryde by thys reason, for  
why a garlade of floures is not set vpon the arme nor  
vpon

hpon the fote, but hpon the heed, that it may be seen.  
Ryght so pryde wolde be seen, agaynst proude men spe  
keth saynt Austyn, saying thus. *Quercus supbiū vides  
ris filiū diaboli dici nō dubitetis.* That is to say, what  
proude man that þ mayst se, doubte ye not to call hym  
the sone of the deuyl. Do thou therfore as the mayden  
dyd, bewepe thy synne & drawe of the garland of pryde  
and cast it in the dyche of contrycyon, & so shalt þ gyue  
the deuyl a great buffet & ouercōme hym. But whan  
thys iugler, that is to say, our goostly ennemy þ deuyl  
seeth hymselfe ouercōme in one synne, thā he returneth  
and tempteth a man in an other synne, & casteth befoze  
man the gyrdel of lechery. But alas there be full many  
gyrde wyth the gyrde of lechery, of the whych gyrde  
speketh saynt Gregory, saying thus. Gyrde we our loy  
nes wyth þ gyrde of chastyte, for who so euer is gyrde  
wyth thys gyrde shall not lese the course of lyfe. Than  
casteth the iugler forth, þ is to say the deuyl, the purse  
wyth the ball. The purse that is open aboue & close vn  
der betokeneth þ hert, whyche euermoze sholde be close  
vnder agaynst erthly thynges, & open aboue to heuēly  
ioye, & the two strynges þ openeth & shyteth the purse  
betokeneth the loue of god & of our neyghbours. The  
ball whych is rounde & mouable to euery parte of hys  
dyfference betokeneth couetyse, whyche moueth euer  
bothe in yonge & in olde, & therfore the pōsey was good  
and true that was wyten on the purse, who so playeth  
wyth me, that is to say wyth couetyse, they shall nener  
be fulfylled. Therfore sayth Seneca. *Quā oīa pētā se  
nescunt, sola cupiditas iuuenescit.* Whan þ all synnes  
ware olde, than couetyse al onely wareth yonge. Ther  
fore let vs take hede þ we playe not w this bal of coue  
tyse,



tyse, & than wythout doubte we shall optayne & wyne  
the game with þ tenes ball in þ blyse of heuen þ neuer  
shall haue ende. Unto the whyche blyse bynge vs he,  
that shedde hys blode for vs vpon the rode tree. Amen.

**S**omtyme in Rome dwelled a myghty Empe-  
rour & a wyse named Theodose, whyche aboue  
all thyng loued best melody of harpe & huntynge. It  
befell after vpon a day as thys Emperour hunted in a  
fozest he herde so swete a melody of harpes that thzugh  
the swetnes therof he was almoost rauyshed fro hym  
seife, wherfoze he sought about the fozeist to fynde that  
melody, & at the last he espyed at the ende of the fozeist a  
pooze man sytting besyde a water playng on a harpe  
so swetely, that theemperour befoze þ dawe herde neuer  
so swete a melody. Than sayd theemperour, good frēde  
cōmeth this melody of thy harpe or no. The pooze man  
answered & sayd. My reuerende lord I shall tell you þ  
trowth. Besyde this water my wyfe & my chyld and I  
haue dwelled. xxx. yere, and god hath gyuen me suche  
grace, that whan so euer I touche my harpe, I make  
so swete melody that þ fysshes of thys water cōme out  
to my hande, and so I take them, wherwpyth my wyfe  
my chyld and I ben fedde dayly in great plenty. Wnt  
alas & welaway, on the other syde of thys water there  
cōmeth a whysteler & whysteleth so swetely, that ma-  
ny tymes the fysshes forsake me & go to his whysteling  
and therfoze my reuerende lord I beseeche you of helpe  
agaunst his whystynge & whystelyng. Than sayd the empe-  
rour, I shall gyue the good helpe and consyle, I haue  
here in my purse a golden hoke whyche I shall gyue þ  
take thou it and bynde it fast at the ende of a roode, and  
wyth

wyth þ synye thy harpe, & whan þ seest the fysshe stere  
drowe them vp to the lande wyth that hoke, & than his  
whystelyng ne hyssyng shall not auayle. Whan þ pooze  
mā herd thys, he reioysed hym greatly, & dyd al thyng  
as he had taught hym. And whan thys pooze man be-  
gan to touche hys harpe þ fysshe moued, & than he toke  
them vp wyth hys hoke, & lyued therby longe tyme, &  
at the last ended graciously hys lyfe in peace and rest.  
¶ Thys Emperour betokeneth Jesu Chryst, whyche  
greatly delyteth to hunte the soule of mankynde in the  
fozest, that is holy chyrche. He loueth also the melody of  
the harpe, that is to saye, he loueth moche those þ teche  
the holy worde of god. This pooze man that late bi the  
water syde betokeneth the prelates of the chyrche & the  
prechers of þ worde of god, whyche ought to syt besyde  
the worlde, & not in the worlde, þ is to saye, they sholde  
not set theyr helpe in worldly thynges. The prechers  
ought to haue the harpe of holy scripture, wherw they  
may prayse & honour god, & also therewith drowe out of  
this worlde þ synners. Therfore sayth þ psalmist thus  
Prayse ye god in tympanes & crowdes, and synge ye to  
hym on the harpe & the psalter of .x. strenges, But now  
adapes the precher may say alas, for whan I preche &  
teche holy scripture, the deuyl cometh & whysteleth so  
sweetely that þ synners drowe to hym, & wyl not heare  
the worde of god, but they turne themselte onely to the  
delyte of synne. The deuyl deceyueth also mākynde by  
dyuerse wayes. fyrst in tyme of prechyng he maketh  
some to slepe, & them that he can not make to slepe, he  
causeth them to talke & clatter, & them that he can not  
make to clatter, he maketh them so dull that they may  
not sauour ne vnderstande what the precher sayth, &

them that he can not begyle by these meanes, he putteth in them besynesse, & causeth them to go out of the chyrche. Lo so many wayes the deuyl hath to deceyue mankynde, & to let y<sup>e</sup> worde of god. Therfore euery prelate & euery precher behoueth y<sup>e</sup> golden hoke of goddes grace agaynst thys whysteling, by y<sup>e</sup> whych grace they may drawe synners out of this worlde vp to heuen, vn to the whyche byrnye vs our lord Iesus. Amen.

**U** Here dwelled somtyme in Rome a myghty Emperour & a wyse man named Polemus, whyche had no chylde saue onely a doughter, whome he loued so moche that dayly & nyghtly he ordeyned to kepe her wyth armed knyghtes. And aboue these knyghtes he ordeyned a mayster well taught in euery connyng for to teche them & to enferme them how they shold do. He ordeyned also a steward for to guide his household. And whan all thys was done, on a nyght as he laye in hys bedde he bethought hym y<sup>e</sup> he wolde go vnsyte the holy lande. And than whā all thyng was redy for his iourney accordyng to hys purpose, he called vnto hym his steward & sayde, Dere frende I purpose to se the holy lande, & therfore I leue my doughter in thy keepyng, & also I charge the that she lacke nothyng, but that she haue all maner of ioye & gladnes that pertayneth to a byrgyn. Secondly I leue in thy keepyng syue knyghtes that ben her keepers, that they lacke nothyng y<sup>e</sup> to them behoneth. Also I leue to the my grethoude, that thou nouryshe & fede hym as it apperteyneth, & yf y<sup>e</sup> fulfyll all thys that I haue sayd, thou shalt at my comyng agayne receyue a great rewarde. Than sayd y<sup>e</sup> steward, My dere lord in all y<sup>e</sup> I may I shal fulfyll your wyll.

Whan

Whan thys was sayd the Emperour toke hys iourney  
to warde the holy lande, and the steward a longe tyme  
kepte well & truly thempourours ordynaunce. But at the  
last it befell vpon a daye that this steward had espyed  
this yonge lady walkyng alone in an orcheyarde, with  
whofe loue he was sodely taken, wherfore anone a-  
gaynst her wyll he deflowred her. And whā he had syn-  
ned wyth her, he gaue her yll lāguage & hated her more  
after than euer he loued her before, & droue her out of hys  
palays, wherfore this damoysele for great pouerte and  
defaute wente fro doze to doze & begged her bzeed. But  
whan the knyghtes that were her keepers herde of thys  
they reproued shamefully the steward of hys synful dede.  
Than the steward waxed wroth, & for great hate that  
he had in his herte he despoyled hys knyghtes of al theyr  
goodes, & droue them fro the palays. And whan they  
were thus robbed & exyled, some for defaute of goodes  
became theues, & some manquellers, that thzugh thys  
incōuenient they wzought great harne. Soone after  
thys there came tydynge that thempourour was arry-  
ued in farre landes cōmyng homewarde. And whan  
the steward herde thys, he was greatly troubled and  
moued in hymselfe, & thus thynkyng in hymselfe he  
sayd thus. Thys may not be but nedes I shall be accu-  
sed for my trespase that I haue done agaynst themp-  
ourours cōmaūdement, he is my lord & mercryable, ther-  
fore better it were that I go & mete w hym wyth all ho-  
nour & humpylte, & accuse my selfe to hym, & aske hym  
mercy, than any other sholde go before to accuse me to  
my lord of my treason. Than this steward anone dyd  
of all his clothes saue his bzeche & his sherte, and toke  
thze ropes wyth hym in his ryght hande, and bare fote  
wente

wente & mette the Emperour. But whan theemperour  
had espyed hym comynge aferre in such a wyse, he wo-  
dred greatly. And whan the steward was come so nere  
that he myght speke to theemperour, he fell downe on  
hys knees & salewed hym reuerently. Than sayd þe Em-  
perour, what is befallen þe that thou metest me in thys  
araye, for as moche as þe art my steward thou shouldest  
haue mette me w a great company of knyghtes. A my  
lord quod he, there is befallen me an heuy case, for the  
whyche it behoueth me thus to mete your hyghnes.  
Than sayd theemperour, what case is that that is be-  
fallen the. My reuerend lord quod he, it behoueth fyrst  
your hyghnes to aske of me why I byynge w me these  
thre ropes. Than sayd theemperour, why bearest thou  
these thre ropes in thy hande in suche a wyse. Than  
answered this wofull steward & sayd. This fyrst corde  
I byynge wyth me to bynde my handes & fete so harde  
tyll the blode brest out on euery syde, for þe I haue well  
deserued. The second rope I byynge wyth me to drawe  
me by hors taylor vpon þe pavement tyll that my bones  
be bare wythout fleshe, for that shal proupte me for the  
great treason þe I haue done agaynst you. The thyrde  
rope þe I haue brought is to hange me w vpo an hygh  
galous so longe that the byrdes lyght on my heed & on  
my body, & fede themself of my fleshe, & these thynges  
ben due to suchetrespacers & brekers of the lawe as I  
am, & therfore my reuerende lord haue mercy on me,  
for I dare not knowlege my trespass tyl I be certayne  
of thy mercy & pyte. Than sayd theemperour, I se in the  
great mekenes & contricion, therfore tell forth thy tres-  
pace, & sothly þe shalte fynde mercy & grace. Alas alas  
than sayd he, I haue defouled thy doughter, & put her  
out



out of thy palays, & now for great defaute she beggeth  
her breed from doze to doze. I haue also despoiled thy  
knyghtes of all theyr goodes, & now some of them for  
defaute of goodes ben theues, & some manquellers, &  
the mayster of þ knyghtes I haue slayne. But I haue  
fedde thy greyhounde w the best as longe as I myght  
and tyed hym wyth a chayne, but at þ last he brake hys  
chayne & wente hys waye, so þ now he renneth aboute  
in the countre. Whan thempourour herde thys, he was  
soze astonyed & layde. Hast thou defouled my doughter  
whome I loued so well, & also exiled my knyghtes and  
slayne theyr mayster, & the greyhounde whyche I loued  
best, of whome I gaue the charge is gone also, sothly  
were it not that I had forgyuen it the, & that þ mekest  
thy selfe so greatly, I wolde put the to the moost vilest  
deth that coude be thought. Therfore go thou anone &  
brynge agayne my doughter, than mayst thou wedde  
her, and yf ony harme here after befall to her in thy de-  
faute, than shall I double thy payne. Also brynge thou  
agayn my knyghtes, & restore to them theyr goodes, &  
set them in theyr state and offyce as they were before.  
And also seke diligently my greyhounde tyll þ fynde hym  
and than bynde hym fast, so that in the here after may  
be founde no defaute. And whan þ stewarde herde this  
he bowed downe hys heed & thanked the Emperour of  
hys great mercy. And than he wente forth and sought  
thzugh out all the Emprye so longe tyll he had founden  
the Emperours doughter and the knyghtes, and also  
they greyhounde, and brought them agayne. And after  
that wedded the yonge lady wyth great honour & ioye,  
and also restored agayne the knyghtes goodes. And at  
the last he ended hys lyfe in peace and rest.

**T**hyſ Emperour betokeneth our lord Jeſu Chryſt  
hyſ doughter betokeneth þ ſoule of man, made at the  
ſimilitude of our lord god. And the. v. knyghtes beto  
keneth the. v. wyttes, armed wth þ vertue of baptyſm  
to kepe the ſoule. The maſter of þ knyghtes is reaſon  
whyche ought to rule the wyttes. The greyhounde is  
the fleſhe of man. The ſteward betokeneth euery man  
to whome god hath gyuen lyfe and ſoule to kepe vnder  
payne of leſyng euerlaſtyng lyfe. But a wretched man  
remēbyringe that is to come full often corrupteth & de  
ſouleth hyſ ſoule by ſynne, & dzyueth her from her pa  
lays of heuen, & than goth ſhe frō doze to doze, that is to  
ſay, frō ſynne to ſynne. He deſpoyled theſe. v. knyghtes  
of theyr goodes, that is to ſaye, the. v. wyttes of theyr  
vertues, takynge away the lawfull ſyght fro the eyen,  
exhortynge them vnlawfully, & alſo ſcryng the eares  
to heare ſclaūder & backbytyng, & ſo forth of al þ other  
wyttes, & thus ſome be made theues, & ſome māquel  
lers. The maſter of theſe. v. wyttes is ſayne whan ſo  
euer man is ruled by wyll, & not by reaſon. The grey  
hounde, that is the fleſhe, wherin a man delyteth was  
fedde, & bounde w the chayne of reaſon, whyche he bye  
keth full ofte & renneth out, & doth moche harme. The  
cōpyngge agayne of thyſ Emperour from þ holy laude  
betokeneth the cōpyngge of our lord Jeſu Chryſt at the  
daye of dome to deime all mākynde. Therfore do we as  
the ſteward dyd, accuſe we fyrſt our ſelfe of our ſynnes  
leſt the deuyl & the woꝛlde accuſe vs, & than it were to  
late to aſke mercy, therfore do we of our clothes betime  
that is to ſaye, our ſynfull lyfe, & take we the ropes in  
our handes. The fyrſt rope þ ſholde bynde our handes  
and fete, betokeneth the rope of contrycyon, whych not  
onely

onely ought to bynde our handes and fete, but also our  
other membres, bothe wythin and wythout so harde,  
that the blode bzaist out on euery syde, that is to saye,  
that the synne might boyde. Hereto accordeth Ezechiel  
saying thus. In quacūq; hora egerit penitentiā pctōr  
saluus erit. When so euer þ synfull man doth penaūce  
he shall be saued. The seconde corde for to drawe þ tres-  
pacer, is confessyon, whych sholde drawe vs from the  
begynnyng of our lyfe vnto this daye by þ penaūce of  
our mouth vnto the tyme that the fleshe be fallen fro  
the bones, that is to saye, tyll the lust of þ fleshe be tur-  
ned away by the stones of penaūce. For in lyke wyse as  
the stone by nature & kynde is harde, ryght so penaūce  
ought to be harde. The thyrde rope that sholde hange  
the felon, is þ rope of satisfaccyon, of whych hangyng  
speketh the apostle, saying. Suspende elegit a ia mea.  
My soule hath chosen to be hanged. For lyke as a man  
is lyfte vp from the grounde by hangyng, ryght so a  
synner is lyfte vp fro synne toward heuen vnto god by  
the hāgyng of satisfaccyō vpon thys galous, we shold  
hange tyll the byrdes of heuen came downe, þ is to say  
tyll the apostles come downe to fede vs wyth our good  
dedes. For there is moze ioye of one synner doyng hys  
penaūce afore the aūgels of god in heuen. &c. A lyke as  
the stewart brought agayne the myghty doughter.  
So it behoueth vs to seke about by dyuerse werkes of  
mercy, & fynde our soule þ we lost, & byrge her agayn  
to the chyrche, & rule well our. v. wyttes, and fede our  
greyhounde as we sholde, & make our lyfe so clene and  
pure, that we fall not agayne to synne for drede that if  
fortune to vs worse, & þ we haue no leysur to aske mer-  
cy agayn at our nede. And yf we fulfyll al this truly vn  
h. ii. to

to our lyues ende, wout doubte we shall optayne euer-  
lastyng lyfe. To þ which our lord brynge vs all. Amē.

**I**n Rome dwelled somtyme a myghty Emperoure  
and a wyse named Cdsenne, whyche ordeyned for a  
law that who so euer rauysched a mayde, shold be at  
her wyll, whether she wolde put hym to deth, or þ she  
wolde haue hym to her husbande. It befell after that  
a man rauysched in a nyght two fayre maydēs, þ fyrst  
damoyzell desyred that he sholde dye, & the seconde desy-  
red wedding. The rauyscher was taken & ledde before  
the iudge, that sholde satisfye bothe these damoylles  
thrygh hys wyldome & ryghtfulnes. The fyrst damoy-  
sell euer desyred the deth accor dyng to the lawe. Than  
sayd the seconde, I desyre hym to be my husbande, for  
in lyke wyse as thou hast the lawe for the, in lyke wyse  
I haue it for me, & neuerthelesse my petcyon is moze  
better than yours, for it is moze charytable, therfore  
me thynketh in my reason that the iustyce sholde grue  
sentence wyth me. Than the iustyce vnderstādyng the  
greate mercy of the seconde damoyzell, gaue iudgemēt  
that he sholde wedde her, and so it was done.

**T**his Emperour betokeneth our lord Jesu Chryst.  
The rauyscher betokeneth euery synner, whyche ra-  
uyscheth goddes mercy as often as he defouleth the cō-  
maūdemētes of god by synne, for the deuyll may neuer  
ouercome man but yf it be suffred by wyll. For saynt  
Austyn sayth. Non est peccatū nisi sit volūtariū. It is  
no synne but yf it be voluntary. The synner rauyscheth  
the mercy of god as oft as he hath very cōtricion. The  
rauyscher also is called afoze the Justyce whan þ soule  
is departed from the body, and anone the fyrst damoy-  
sell

sell (that is the deuyl) layde agaynst the synner that he  
ought to dye euerlastyngly by þe lawe of ryghtwysnes.  
But that other mayden (that is Chryst) layde for her  
how þe mercy of god ought to helpe by cōtricyon & cōfessyon,  
whyche is þe hygh waye to euerlastyng lyfe. Un-  
to the whyche god bynne bothe you & me. Amen.

**S**omtyme dwelled in Rome a myghty emperour  
and a ryche named Lypodys, whyche toke to  
wyfe a fayre byrgyn & a gentyll, and was the kyng of  
Allyprens boughter. This yonge lady cōceyued & bare  
a chylde, & in the byrth of her sone she dyed. And anone  
after her decease thys Emperour wedded an other wyfe  
and begate her wyth chylde also. And anone after that  
these chyldezen were bozne, he sente them bothe in to a  
straunge lande for to be nourysched. Than sayd the mo-  
ther of the seconde chylde. My reuerende lozde. x. yeres  
ben passed syth I bare my chylde, and yet sawe I hym  
neuer but ones, & that was the fyrst daye of hys byrth,  
therfore I beseeche you my lozde to sende for hym, that  
I may ones reioyce me of hys syght. Than sayd þe Em-  
perour, I haue an other chylde by my fyrst wyfe, & yf  
I sende for thy sone than must I sende for bothe, & thā  
anone he sente for them. And whan they were cōmen  
they were passyng fayre & wel nourysched, wel taught  
and passyng lyke in al maner thynges, that vnnethes  
that one myght be knowen fro that other but yf it were  
swely of the father. Than sayd the mother of þe seconde  
chylde. A my lozde tell me whyche of these is my sone, &  
he called hym her sone that he begate on hys fyrst wyfe.  
Whan the mpressse herde thys, she gaue all her cure to  
nourysche & to teache hym, & despyed that other. Whan



the Emperour sawe thys, he sayd to hys wyfe. Sothly  
I haue deceyued the, for hym that þ louest so moche is  
not thy sone but that other is thy sone. Than set she all  
her cure vpon the second, & forsoke the fyrst. Whan the  
Emperour sawe thys, he sayd. Truly I haue deceyued  
the yet, without doubte this is not thy sone, but one of  
them two is thy sone. Than sayd þ mother. A my lord  
for hys loue that dyed on þ rode tell me wythout cauel-  
lacyn whyche of them is my sone. The Emperour an-  
swered & sayd, certaynly I wyl not tell you tyll they be  
come to māhode, for this reason. Fyrst I tolde you that  
thys was thy sone, & hym thou nourysshed as thy sone  
and forsokest that other, & whan I tolde you that thys  
was thy sone, than þ despyled the fyrst & cherysshedest  
the seconde, therfore I wyl that thou cheryshe & nou-  
ryshe them bothe tyll they come to that þ mayst haue  
ioye of them. Whan themprelle herde thys, she nourys-  
shed them bothe a lyke. And whā they were bothe come  
to age, theemperour made a great supper, and befoze all  
hys gesses he tolde hys wyfe openly whyche of them  
was her chylde. Than reioyced she greatly, & wyth her  
sone she ended her lyfe in peace and rest.

¶ Thys Emperours soncs betokeneth those þ be cho-  
sen to euerlastyng lyfe, & those þ be not chosen. The mo-  
ther of them is the chyryche þ nouryssheth them bothe.  
Therfore our lord wyl not þ the chyryche holde knowe  
whyche be chosen and whyche be not chosen. For yf she  
knewe that, than wolde she loue þ one & hate þ other, &  
so wolde charyte be ouerthrowen amonge vs, & wolde  
lyue in discorde & stryfe, but trawth at the daye of dome  
shall tell vs whyche of them shall be saued, and whyche  
shall be dampned. Therfore praye we in thys worlde  
that

that we may come to the euerlastyng feest in heuen.  
Unto the whyche god byyng bothe you & me. Amen.

**S**omatyme dwelled in Rome a myghty emperour  
named Bolēnus, whyche had thre sones whom  
he loued moche. It befell vpon a daye whan thys Em-  
perour lay vpo hys bedde, he bethought hym to whych  
of hys sones he myght gyue hys empyre after hys de-  
cese. Than called he to hym hys thre sones and sayde.  
Whyche of you thre ys slowest, shall haue myne Em-  
pyre after my decese. The fyrst sone answered & sayde.  
Thyne Empyre by reason shall be myne, for I am so  
slowe, that yf my fote were in the fyre, I had leuer y it  
holde be brent than to take it out. Than sayd y second  
I am quod he moze apte to the Empyre than thou, for  
though there were a rope aboute my necke wherwyth  
I holde behanged, & yf I had a sharpe swerde in my  
hande for greate slouth that I haue I wolde not put  
forth my hande to cutte the rope in sauynge of my lyfe.  
And whā these two bzetherne had sayd, the thyrde said  
for him thus. I ought to be emperour befoze you bothe  
for I passe you in slouth, & that wyll I proue thus: I  
lye vpryght in my bedde, & there droppeth water vpon  
bothe myne eyes, & for greate slouth y I haue I meue  
not my heed neyther to the ryght syde of the bedde nor  
to the lefte syde for sauynge of my selfe. Whan the Em-  
perour herde thys, he byquethed the Empyre vnto the  
yongest sone as to the slowest of the bzetherne.

**T**hys Emperour betokeneth the deuyl, whyche is  
lozde & father ouer y chyche of pryde. By the fyrst sone  
is vnderstande a man that cometh in euyl felawshyp  
by whome he falleth in mysgouernaūce, & had leuer to  
be

be brente in the fyze of synne, than departe from them.  
The second sone betokeneth hym þ knoweth hym selfe  
bounde wyth the bande of synne, wherwyth he is to be  
hanged on the galous of hell, & is so slouthfull that he  
wyl not cut them away wyth the lawfull swerde of co  
fession. By the thyrde sone is vnderstande a man that  
heareth the techynge of þ ioyes of heuen & of þ paynes  
of hell, and wyl not meue hym selfe to the ryght syde for  
loue & desyre of rewarde, nor to the lyfte syde to forsake  
hys synnes for drede of turmēt. Suche a man wythout  
doubte for hys slouth shall optayne the realme of hell,  
from þ whych realme kepe vs our lord Iesus. Amē.

**T**Here dwelled somtyme in Rome a myghty Em  
peroure named Alexander, the whyche besyged  
a cyte of the kyng of Egypte wyth a great hoost, neuer  
thelesse thys Emperour lost many myghty knyghtes  
without ony hurte of stroke. And thus from day to day  
hys people dyed sodeynly, wherat thys Alexander won  
dred greatly & was ful sorowful therof in his mynde, &  
anone let cal afore hym þ wysest philosophers þ myght  
befounde, and prayed thē to tell hym why hys people  
dyed thus sodeynly wout wounde. The phylosophers  
answered & sayd. My lord it is no wonder, for vpon þ  
walles of that castel win the cite is a cocatryce, thzugh  
whose syght your men dye, for they ben infected w the  
benym that cometh of hys eyen, & anone they dye. Than  
this Alexander asked yf there were ony remedy agaynst  
that cocatryce. The philosophers answered and sayd.  
My lord there is a good remedy, whych is thys, let set  
bp a large myrrour of clere glasse ouer agaynst thys co  
catryce bytwene your hoost & the wall of the cyte, and  
whan

whan the myrrour beholdeþ hymselfe in the myrrour  
the deede nature of his venymous syght þat reboarde  
agayn to hymselfe, and thus he shall dye, and pour  
men shall be saved. The Emperoure wrought by the  
counsaile of the phylosophers, and let set by anone a  
large myrrour of glasse, and thus was thys cocatryce  
saynt, and the Emperour wyth hys hoost made an as-  
saute to the cite, and optayned the vyctory.

**T**his Emperour may be called ony chryste man, the  
whyche ought to gader an hoost of vertues, for wyth-  
out betwixt these may no man fyght goostly. The cite  
agaynst whome he shall fyght is the world, wherein  
there is an high castell, that is to saye, banite of vany-  
tees. *Vanitas vanitatu.* And al banite, in thys banite  
standeth the cocatryce, that is to saye, pryde of lyfe, de-  
spise of euen, & lyste of fleshe, wherfore thys pryde in-  
fecteth in man, that they dye at the last euerlastyngly.  
Wherfore the greatest remedy agaynst thys pryde, is þat  
we consyder acyon of our vncleynnes, how we came naked in  
to thys world, & yf it be asked why a man is proude,  
certaynly it may be answered thus, for þat defaute of els  
thyng of vertues, what shall we do whan we dye thus  
goostly but set by a pooze myrrour of consyence, & by  
that consyence we may consyder our wyll & our byt-  
tylnes as in a glasse, where thou mayst se thyne owne  
defaute, & yf we do thus wythout doubte þat cocatryce, þat  
is pryde of lyfe, despise of euen, & lust of fleshe, we shall  
wythly destroye & optayne þat vyctory of this worldly ci-  
te, & than be we lare to wyne euerlastyng lyfe, vnto  
the which god bringe us by your and me.

**A** myghty emperour sonnyng & noble in name  
named Archelaus, the whyche was the sonne of  
ges. 130. i. j. wooden

Anfo

wedded a fayre yonge lady, whome a yonge knyght lo-  
ued, & had to do wyth her as ofte as hym lyst. It befell  
on a nyght that thys Emperour bethought hym in his  
bedde to visyte þe holy lande, wherfore wout any more  
delay he ordeyned al thyng necessary to his iourney, &  
toke hys leue of thempresse & of the states of thempyre  
& went towarde þe holy lande. Whan thempresse herde  
thys, she toke the mayster of the shyppe & sayd. If thou  
wylte consent to me & be true, aske of me what þe wylte  
& thou shalt haue it. The mayster of the shyppe was  
smitten wyth couetyse & sayd. O my dere lady what so  
euer ye wylle comaunde me I shall wythout fayle fulfyll  
it, so that ye wylle rewarde me for my labour. Thā sayd  
thempresse, or þe do ought for me I shall gyue the what  
the lyst to haue, so that þe wylte swere to be true to me  
and kepe my counseyle. The mayster of þe shyppe anon  
made hys othe to be true to her. Than sayd thempresse  
My lord goth wyth you in your shyppe, therfore whan  
he is in the myddes of the see, cast hym out that he may  
be drowned, & ye shall optayne your rewarde wythout  
any wythsayng. Than the mayster of þe shyppe swore  
a greute othe & sayd. By god after he cometh ones win  
my shyppe, ye shall neuer se hym moze. Than the lady  
payde hym as moche golde as he wolde haue, & forth  
he wente to hys shyppe. And wythin shorte tyme after  
the Emperour take hys shyppe, & whan he was in the  
myddes of þe see, the mayster of þe shyppe toke the em-  
perour & threwe hem ouer boorde in to the see. Than the  
mayster returned agayne & tolde the Empresse that the  
Emperour was casten in to þe see, wherof she was full  
glad. Thys Emperour that thus was cast in to the see  
had lerned in hys yowth to stowme, & swamme forth  
tyll



tyll he sawe an ylande in the see, but euer in hys swym-  
mynge whā he was faynt & lyke to haue ben drowued  
he prayed god to be hys helpe & wepte soze, tyll at y last  
he came in to a lyttel ylande wherin was nothynge but  
lyons & lybbardes & dyuerse other beestes, that swam  
thyder from other landes. Whan thys Emperour had  
taken lande in that yle he espyed a ponge lyon fyghting  
with an olde lybbarde, & the lyon was almoost ouercō-  
men. The Emperour had great cōpassyon on y lyon, &  
drew out his swerde & slewe y lybbard. The lyon euer  
from that tyme forth folowed the Emperour, & wolde  
not leue hym for nothynge, but euery day y praye that  
this lyon toke he brought & layde it afoze theemperours  
fete, & anone theemperour smote fyze on the flynt stone,  
and boyled the body in the skynne, & thus was he fedde  
longe tyme, tyll at the last as he walked to y see strande  
he sawe a shyppe cōme saylpyng by, & anone wā an hys  
voyce he cryed. And whan y shypmen herde thys voyce  
they wondred what it myght be, wherfoze they sayled  
twarde hym, & whan they were cōme to hym he sayde  
Good frendes take me w you, & I shal paye you a good  
freight. And anone they toke hym in to theyr shyppe, &  
the lyon folowed hym swymmyng in the see after the  
shyppe. And whan the lyon was in poynt to haue ben  
drowued, the shypmen had pyte on hym, & toke hym in  
to the shyppe. And whan the Emperour came to lande  
he payde hys freight, & whan he had payde them, he  
wente forth tyll he came nere hys owne palays, where  
he herde trōpettes & claryons, wyth all maner of other  
mynstrallse, & as he herkened what it myght be, there  
came fro the palays a squyer toward hym that was of  
his knowlege, but y squyer knewe not hym, to whome

the Emperour sayd thus. Good frende I praye the tell  
me what melody is thys that I heare. The squyer an-  
swered & sayd. The Emperesse is maryed thys day, and  
there ben all the states of the empyre at her feest, & there-  
fore they make suche melody to make her gesses mery.  
Than sayde the emperour to þe squyer, where is her hus-  
bande that was Emperour before. The squyer sayde þe  
he was gone to the holy lande, & was drowned by the  
weye in the see. Than sayd the emperour, I praye þe say  
that thou woldest do myne erande to the emperesse & to þe  
lord that wolde be her husbände, that I may chaine in  
to þe palays & playe afore them w<sup>th</sup> myn lion. The squyer  
graunted to do his erande, & went in & tolde the lord &  
the lady that at þe gate was a goodly olde man that de-  
syreth to come in & play with his lion afore you. Than  
sayd the newe wedded lord, byghete hym in, w<sup>th</sup> yf he be  
worthy percase he myght gete hys meate for hys playe.  
Whan the Emperour w<sup>th</sup> hys lion was brought in, the  
lion anon went ony cōforte or setting on, ranne vpon  
the ponge knyght þe was newly maryed & slewe hym, &  
whan he had so done, he ranne vpon the Emperesse & de-  
noured her to the harde bones before all þe lordes of the  
Empyre. And whan the states sawe thys, they were  
greatly agast & began to flee. But the emperour w<sup>th</sup> hys  
fayre speche cōforted them & sayd. Aoo thys is the ven-  
geaunce of god, for thys is my wyfe þe hath bled aoun-  
try longe tyme w<sup>th</sup> thys knyght that lyeth here deed,  
and she ymagyned my deth w<sup>th</sup> the mayster of þe thynne,  
and here vpon the mayster threwe me in to the see, but  
god saued me fro þe deth, & bycause I holpe ones þe lion  
at a nede, he forsoke me neuer syth, and now as þe se al  
whan I came in to my palays wout ony cōforte of me  
he

he hath slayne bothe the auouterers, & therfore vnder-  
stande ye for trouth that I am your lord & Emperour  
None whan they herde thys, they lyst vp theyr eyes &  
behelde hym, and at the last they knewe hym for theyr  
lord, wherfore they were greatly reioyced, & praysed  
god for that miracle, whiche had saued theyr lord and  
Emperour. And they lylied after in rest and peace.

¶ By thys Emperour ye may vnderstande euery chry-  
sten man that purposeth to by fyte & holy lande, that is  
to saye, to gete euerlastynge lyfe thurgh the workes of  
mercy. But hys wyfe, that is the wretched fleshe mur-  
mureth agaynst the soule, & loueth better her leman  
that is deedly synne, than her husbnde. Thys Empe-  
rour went in to the shyppe takynge hys iourney toward  
the holy lande, that is to saye, he wente to holp chyrche  
whiche is & waye to god. But the wyfe, that is to saye  
fleshy men accused hym to & mayster of & shyppe, that  
is to saye, to the prelates of the chyrche for great mede  
whiche oftentimes blyndeth & syght of many iustices  
wher thurgh many pite men ben cast out of & shyppe  
in to the see to be drowned, & is to saye, out of & chyrche  
in to the see of thys worlde. But what shall he do than  
that is thus casten to be troubled in thys worlde, cer-  
tainly thus ought he to do, let hym lerne to swynne,  
that is to say, let hym put al hys hope in god, & that by  
hys grace he shall come to an ylande, that is to say, the  
religyon of clene herte, & that he shall loue euer & better  
to kepe hymselfe out of thys worlde, and therfore sayth  
saynt James thus. A clene religyon & vndefyled is a  
precious thynge in & syght of god, & he & is in this reli-  
gion shall fynde a lyon, whome hym behoueth to gyue  
agaynst the deuyll. This lyon is our lord Iesu Christ  
i. iij. that

that came of þe kynrede of Jude, whyche fygtheth euere  
agaynst the deuyll, & yf a man hath holpen this lyon at  
ony tyme, trust well than that he wyll not for sake hym  
but be wth hym at all his nede, accordyng to the psalmist  
saying thus. Cū ipso sū in tribulatione. I am wth hym  
in trouble. By thys lyon thou mayst take thy wyfe, þis  
to say, thy fleshe wth penaunce & see thy synne, & than  
wythout doubte þe shalt optayne the Empryre of heuen.  
Vnto the whych byngge vs our lord Iesus. Amen.

**S**ometime in Rome dwelled a myghty emperoure  
named Gozgony, whych had maried a curteys  
lady & a fayre to hys wyfe. This yonge lady in due pro  
cesse cōceyued & bare hym a sone, a fayre chyld and an  
amiable. Whan thys chyld was .x. yere olde, hys mo  
ther the Emperesse dyed. And anone after þe Emperoure  
wedded an other wyfe. Thys seconde wyfe loued in no  
wyse the emperours sone, but dyd hym al the shame and  
represe that she myght. Whan the Emperoure perceyued  
thys, wyllyng to please hys wyfe, exiled his sone out of  
hys empryre. And whā thys chyld was exyled, he went  
and lerned physyke, so that wythin thorte tyme he was  
a subtyll & a connyng physycyan. It befell soone after  
that the Emperoure his father syckened & was almoost  
deed, wherfore whan he herd that hys sone was suche  
a physycyan, he sente for hym by lettres, prayinge hym  
that he wolde cōme to hym wout ony delaye. And than  
the sone wyllyng to obey, & fulfyll his fathers cōmaū  
dement, in all haste came vnto hym. And whan he had  
seen his father & felte hys poulces & his baynes, all the  
sycknes he had was soone healed wyth his medecynes  
from all maner of daūgers. Soone after that the Em  
peresse

preſſe hys ſtepmother began to waxe ſycke. And many  
phyſicians ſayd that ſhe wold dye. And whan the em-  
perour herde thys, he prayed hys ſone to helpe her of her  
ſycknes. Than ſayd hys ſone, certaynly father I wyll  
lay no hande on her. Than þe Emperour began to waxe  
wooth & ſayde. Yf þe wyllte not obey my comaundement  
thou ſhalte voyde my ſelawſhipp. Hys ſone answered &  
ſayd. yf ye do ſo dære father, ye do vnrighfully, for well  
ye knowe that ye exiled me out of your Empyre thzugh  
her ſuggeſtyon, & myne abſence was cauſe of your ſo-  
rowe & ſycknes, & in lyke wyſe my preſence is cauſe of  
her ſycknes, & therfore I wyll not meddle w her, & alſo  
I wyll vſe no moze medicynes, for oftentymes phyſy-  
cians ben deceyued, & therfore I dare not lay hande on  
her, leſt men wold ſaye (yf it forſtuned her to dye) that  
I were cauſe therof. Than ſayd the Emperour. She  
hath þe ſame ſycknes that I had. Hys ſone answered &  
ſayd. Though ſhe haue þe ſame ſycknes, neuertheleſſe  
ye be not of one cōpleccyon. For what ſo euer I dyd to  
you, ye helde you content, and whan ye ſawe me cōme  
wythin þe palays, ye reioyſed of my cōmyng, & greatly  
were eaſed to ſe hym that ye begate. But whā my ſtep-  
mother ſawe me ſhe ſwelled for anger and waxed euyl  
at eaſe, and therfore, yf I ſholde ſpeke to her, her ſorowe  
wolde encreaſe, & yf I ſholde touche her, ſhe wolde be  
from her ſelfe. And alſo a phyſyccan pzoſyteth nought  
but where as þe ſycke man delyteth in hym. And whan  
the chylde had ſayd, he eſcaped & wente hys waye.

¶ Thys Emperour betokeneth euery chryſten man,  
whyche is wedded to his chryſtendom at the font ſtone  
for whā þe ſoule is made þe ſpoule of Chryſt, on whome  
man begeteth a ſone, þe is reaſon. But thys wyſe, that  
is





is to say, chrystendome dyeth whā so euer a man lyeth  
in deedly synne, & after her a man weddeth a stepdame  
that is to saye, wyckednes as of tenty mes as he is ru-  
led by wyll, & not by reason, wherfore a man & lyueth  
by fleschly lust of tenty mes expleth reason, & than anone  
the soule wareth sycke, for the absence of reason is the  
cause of the syknes of the soule. But whā reason that  
is bothe goodly & bodyly the physycyan is byngenge  
agayne by woꝝkes of mercy, than anone man is healed  
of his syknes. But than the stepmother wareth sycke,  
that is to saye, whan feowarde wyll wareth sycke, tha  
is the fleshe oppressed by penaunce. And therfore study  
we to oppresse our fleshe so by penaunce, that we may  
commite to euerlastyng ioye. Amen.

**S**omtyme in Rome dwelled a myghty emperour  
named Folemus, whych had wedded a kynges  
doughter of Germany, a fayre lady & a curteis, which  
wythin thorte tyme conceyued and bare a son. Whan  
thys chyld was borne, the states of the Emperie came  
to the Emperour, & euery che of them besought the Em-  
perour to nauryshe hys sone. The Emperour answered  
& sayd. To morowe shall be a tourney, & there shall  
pe all be, and whyche of you dothe best & optayneth the  
vyctory, shall haue the keepyng of my sone. & yf he naur-  
yshe hym well, I shall promote hym to great magny-  
tyude and honour. And yf he do the contrary, he shall dye the  
foulest deth that can be thought. Thā sayd they. Were  
forde all thys pleaseth vs well. On the morowe whan  
euery man was come to the tourney, the states iusted  
and scarmysched full manfully dange tyme. At last  
there came a doughty knyght named Iohas, that is  
manfully

manfully bare hymselfe amonge them, that he wanne  
the byctory. And anone whan all thys was done, this  
Josias toke þe chylde & ledde hym forth with hym. And  
bycause this Emperours sone shold be receyued in his  
countree, he sente befoze to his castell, & comaunded his  
offycers that it sholde be dryght bothe wout & within, &  
that the chylde's bedde shold be made in the myddes of  
the castell, & also the seven scyences sholde be paynted  
aboute the chylde's bedde, that whan the chylde wake-  
ned out of hys slepe, he myght lye in his bedde and rede  
his lesson. This knyght had a fruytfull and a hollsome  
well by þe chylde's beddes syde, wherein he bled to bathe  
hymselfe, & the knyghtes wyfe bare þe key of this well  
and there wass a wyndowe þe sonne myght come in  
and syne. It fortunied on a daye that the lady þe kepte  
the key lefte þe wyndowe open thurgh necligence. And  
whan the lady had so done, there came a bere and sawe  
the wyndowe open and went to the well & bathed hym  
therin, of whose bathynge the well sauoured after for  
the greute hete that was that tyme, wherfoze who so  
euer dronke therof wared lepre wthin thort tyme. And so  
it fortunied within a lyttell space after that þe lord & the  
lady & al theyr household were lepers, & not wistandng  
it appered not sodernly. And in the meane tyme there  
came a great egle in at þe wyndowe where as the Em-  
perours sone laye, and bare the chylde away out of his  
cradell. And whan the knyght perceyued this, he wepte  
bitterly & sayd, Alas alas & woe to me wretched crea-  
ture that euer I was bozne, what shall I do, for now  
I am the sone of deth, for I am a foule leper, & so is my  
wyfe & all my household. And the while he was thus  
mournynge there came to hym a physyeyan & sayd to

ges. Ro.

k. j.

hym.

hym. Syr yf ye wyl do after my counseyle, it shall not  
repent you. fyrst it behoueth you & your wyfe and all  
your houtholde to be letten blode, & after þ to be bathed  
and waschen cleene, & than shall I laye to my medicyne  
And whan ye are hole, than shall you & your wyfe & all  
your houtholde walke to the mountaynes and seke the  
Emperours sone, for the egle hath let hym fall in some  
place. The knyght wzought all thyng by the counseyle  
of thys phisycyan, & anone after was letten blode & re  
ceyued the medicyne, & than he was al hole & hys wyfe  
and all his houtholde, wherfore he lepte on his horse, &  
toke wyth hym thre squyers, & rode forth and sought þ  
chylde. And at the last he founde hym hole and sounde  
lyenge in a valey, & than was he greatly reioysed. And  
for the great ioye & gladnes that was in hym for þ syn  
dyng of theemperours sone he made a great feest, & af  
ter the feest he ledde the chylde home to hys father. And  
whan theemperour sawe his sone in good helth, he was  
ryght glad, wherfore he promoted hym to great woꝝ  
shipp, whych lyued after þ longe tyme in great honour  
and woꝝshipp, & at þ last ended hys lyfe in peace & rest.

¶ Thys Emperour betokeneth the father of heuē, his  
sone betokeneth our lord Iesu Chyrst, whome many  
men desyre to nouryshe at eester whan they receyue þ  
sacrament. He nouryssheth hym that best insteth wyth  
the deuyl and ouercōmeth hym thzugh penaunce. The  
knight that toke this chylde to hym betokeneth a good  
chrysten man that fasteth truly and blyssedly all þ lente  
befoze. Therfore dawē as þ knyght dyd, sende we be  
foze messengers to dyght & to make cleene þ castel of our  
herte from al spottes of synne by woꝝkes of mercy, & so  
shall this chylde Iesu rest & lyght in the myddes of our  
herte

herte. The well betokeneth mercy, whyche ought to be  
nexte our lord. For who so ever is wout mercy & trewth  
may not nouryshe that blessed chylde Jesu. But it hap  
peneth ofte þ the knyghtes wyfe (þ is þ selfe of man)  
beteth the key of mercy, and ofte leueth þ wel open and  
than cometh the bere (that is the deuyl) and casteth be  
nym in to þ well of mercy, and who that tasteth therof  
shall be infected wyth þ leproy of synne. The wyndowe  
wherin the soinne shyneth, is þ grace of þ holy goost, by  
whom men lyue and are confortyd goostly, by this wyndowe  
the egle cometh in, that is to say, the power of al-  
mighty god, and toke away þ chylde Jesu from þ herte  
of man, & thā man hath great cause to wepe, but what  
shall he do whan þ chylde is gone but sende for a subtyl  
phisycyan, that is to saye, a discreyte confessor, whyche  
shall gyue hym counseyle to let hym blode & all his houl  
holde, that is to saye, to put out synne thurgh confessyō  
of tonge befoze his goostly father. Than must he bathe  
hymselfe w teares of contricion & cōpunction of tonge,  
& after þ take the medicyne of satisfaccyon, & than shal  
he be made clene frō al maner of synne. And whan he  
hath done thus, he must lepe on þ palfrey of good lyfe,  
& ryde forth w his thre squyers, that is to say, fastyng,  
prayer & almes dede, & than wout doubte he shal fynde  
the chylde Jesu in the valey of humilite, & not on a hyll  
that is to saye, pryde. And yf he do thus, doubtles he  
shall haue myght and power to nouryshe that blessed  
chylde Jesu, for whose nourysshynge the father of he-  
uen shall promote hym vnto everlastyng ioye. Unto  
the whych ioye god byrynge vs all. Amen.

**S**yntyme dwelled in Rome a myghty Emperoure  
named Fulgentius, whyche gouerned hys people  
k, ij, nobly

nobly, & loued the so moche that he made, to proclayme  
thru gh out all nacyons, that who so euer wolde come  
to hym ryche or pooze at a certayne daye, sholde haue  
theyr peticyons what so euer it were. Whan þe myghty  
men herde thys, they were glad, & came at the daye as-  
signed, & euery man put forth his peticyons vnto the  
Emperour, & anon theyr peticyons were graunted &  
fulfyllled, in so moche that almost all the empyre was  
departed amonge them. And than euery man was iop  
full & went home agayn & toke seasyne of suche landes  
& castels as the Emperour had gyuen them. Anone af-  
ter the pooze men gadzed them togyder and sayd. A com-  
mune crye was made that all men bothe pooze & ryche  
shold come to þe Emperours palays, & theyr they shold  
haue what so euer they asked, & þe ryche men haue ben  
there lately and optayned theyr peticiōs. Therfore go  
we now & wyte yf we may optayne ony good of þe Em-  
perour. That counsel was approbate & allowed amonge  
them all, wherfore they went forth tyll they came to þe  
Emperours palays, & there they put forth theyr peti-  
cyons accordynge to the perours proclamacyon. And  
whan the Emperour had herde them, he sayde to them  
Here frendes I haue herde all your peticyons, & it is  
trowth that my proclamacyon was, yf euery man in-  
differently sholde come & haue theyr peticyons, but the  
ryche & myghty men haue ben here afore you, to whom  
I haue gyuen all that I had, saue onely the royalte of  
my lordshipp, and so haue I nothyng left to gyue you.  
A good lord haue mercy vpon vs, & let vs not go homde  
agayne, for we knowe well that is our owne defaute  
that we came not rather to the se other ryche & myghty  
men, but syth it is so, we aske your grace that we may  
optayne



optayne somwhat by the wherby we may lyue. Than  
sayd the Emperour. Good frendes though I haue gy-  
uen all my landes, rentes & tenementes, & all þ castels  
to the ryche men that came before you. Neuerthelesse  
I haue kepte myll in myne owne handes the lordshipp  
ouer thē, and that lordshipp I gyue to you, and so shall  
they be your seruauntes, & be obedyent to you all. And  
whan the poore men herde thys, they were greatly re-  
ioysed, & kneeled downe to the Emperour & thāked hym  
saying. Lo though we come late, yet we be made lordes  
ouer all these other. And with this they toke theyr leue  
and wente home agayne. But whan the ryche and the  
myghty men herde that, they were greatly moued, and  
set a comune parlyament among them selfe. And thus  
it was spoken amonge them. Alas alas how may we  
serue them that somtyme were but choyles & our sub-  
iectes in al maner thynges, & now they be made lordes  
ouer vs. Therfore go we al wyth one assent to the em-  
perour & praye we hym of remedy. Whan thys was sayd  
theyr counseyle was comended, & forth they went to the  
Emperour & sayd to hym. Reuerende lord what may  
this be, those þ were our seruauntes be made our lordes  
we beseeche you mekely that it may not be so. Thā sayd  
the Emperour. Good frendes I do you no wronge, for  
my crye was comune, that what so euer ye asked of me  
ye shoulde optayne your peticyon, & ye asked nothyng of  
me but landes, rentes & honours, and all that haue I  
graunted you at your owne wyll, in so moche þ I kepte  
nothyng for my selfe, & eche of you were well content  
at your away goynge, & after þ came simple and poore  
men & asked of me some goodes accordynge to my pro-  
clamacyon, & I had nothyng to gyue them, for I had  
h.ii. gyuen

gyuen you all that I had, saue onely the lordshipp ouer  
you, whyche I keppe in my handes, & whan the pooze  
men sorred on me, I had nothyng to gyue them, saue  
onely the lordshipp ouer you, and therfore ye sholde not  
blame me, for that ye asked ye had. Than sayde they.  
A good lord we praye you effectuously of your counsell  
in this case, & of your helpe. The Emperour answered  
& sayd, Syr, yf ye wyll werke after me, I shall gyue  
you good & profitable counseyle. Than sayd they. Lord  
we be redy to fulfill what so euer ye saye to vs for our  
profyte. Than sayd the Emperour. My good frendes ye  
haue of me bothe landes and tenementes, woth other  
inouable goodes, and that great plente, the whyche by  
my counseyle ye shall departe w the pooze men, that they  
may graunte you the lordshipp. And anon these ryche  
men gladly graunted to this, & departed all theyr goodes  
amonge the pooze men, & than they gaue them agayne  
the lordshipp ouer the, lyke as they had of þe ryche men.  
And thus were they bothe content, & the Emperour was  
greatly comended of al the people, bycause he accorded  
bothe the parties so wysely.

**B**y this Emperour is vnderstande our lord Iesu  
Christ, whych made a proclamacyon by his pphetes  
patriarkes, apostles & prechers, that euery man bothe  
pooze & ryche sholde come & aske euerlastyng ioye, and  
withoute doute they shall optayne theyr petition. But  
þe ryche and myghty men asked none other thyng but  
worldly honour & transitory rychesse, for this worlde  
shall passe & all his couetyse, wherfore he gaue them so  
moche of worldly goodes, that he had nothyng left to  
hymselfe, accordyng to scripture. The byrdes of heuen  
haue nestes, & þe foxes in erth haue caues, but þe some of  
god

god hath nothyng in erth where he may put hys heed.  
The pooze men be suche as be meke in herte. Of the  
whyche pooze men spekeþ our lord, saying. Blessed be  
the pooze in herte, for the kyngdom of heuen is theys.  
And yf it sholde seme that they haue lordshypps aboue  
myghty men of this worlde, therfore these ryche men  
ought to departe theyr rycheesse wyth pooze men, accor-  
dyng to the scripture, saying thus. Gyue ye almes, &  
all thyng shall be clene to you. And thus may ye gete  
a lordshyp in heuen, vnto y whyche lordshyp I beseeche  
almighty god to byngge vs, all. Amen.

**S**omtyme in Rome dwelled a myghty emperour  
named Domicyan, whyche had two doughters  
of whome one was passyng fayre, & that other foule &  
vgly to beholde, wherfore he let crye thurgh out all his  
empyre, that what man wolde haue hys fayre dought-  
ter to wyfe, sholde haue nothyng w her but her fayr-  
nes. And who that wedded hys foule doughter, sholde  
haue all hys empyre after hys deth. And whan the pro-  
clamacyon was made, there came many lordes y desy-  
red to wedde hys fayre doughter. Tho whome the Em-  
perour answered thus. Syis w he, ye wote not what  
ye desyre, ryght well ye knowe that yf ye wedde her, ye  
shall haue nothyng w her but her fayrnes, & farther-  
more yf I gyue her to one of you & not to another, than  
wyl ye stryue for her, therfore yf ye wyl nedes haue  
her & forsake my foule doughter, you behoueth fyrst to  
iust for her, and he that wynneth her, shall wedde her.  
Than were the greatest states of y empyre greatly re-  
ioyced, & anone onely for he loue they wolde iust & also  
fyght, wherfore they set a day of batayle, & many wor-  
thy

thy men were slayne on bothe sydes, neuer thelesse one  
optayned the victoꝝy and wedded that fayre lady. The  
seconde doughter that was foule and vgly lawe thys  
that her syster was wedded w great solempnite mour-  
ned & wepte dayly, wherfoze the Emperour her father  
came to her and sayde. Dere doughter why mournest  
thou this. Alas dere father quod she, it is no wonder  
though I mourne, sernge my syster edded wyth so  
great honour & gladnes, & euery man is fayre of her, &  
no man loueth my felawshipp, and therfoze dere father  
what I may best do sothly I wote not. Than sayd the  
emperour, O my dere doughter, all þ is myne is thynne  
and it is not vnknown to you that he whyche wedded  
thy syster had nothyng w her but her fayrnes, & ther-  
foze I shall proclayme in myne owne pson thzugh all  
myne Emprze, that what man weddeth you, I shall  
make hym sure by lettre patēt of al myne emprze after  
my deeth. Thā this yonge lady though she was foule &  
vgly, neuer thelesse she reioyced in þ promesse of her fa-  
ther, & anon after the proclamacyon was made, than  
there came a yonge knight & a gentyll & wedded þ lady  
& after the deeth of the Emperour he sealed all the Em-  
prze and was crowned Emperour and the Emprzesse.

¶ This Emperour betokeneth our lord Iesu Chryst  
which hath two doughters, that one fayre & that other  
foule. That one fayre betokeneth thys worlde, wherch  
is full fayre & delectable to many mē. That other foule  
betokeneth payette & trouble, whome fewe men desyre  
to wedde. Neuer thelesse a continue crye was made by  
holy scripture, that who so wold haue his fayre dought-  
er, that is the worlde, shoulde haue nothyng wth her  
but her fayrnes, that is to saye, the worldly vanities  
whyche

whyche fade & fall a waye lyke as the faynes of man.  
 But who that wyl wedde the foule doughter, that is  
 to say, wylfully to receyue pouerte & trouble for goddes  
 loue, wylthout doubte he shall optayne þe empyre of he-  
 uen, accordyng to scripture, saying. Ye that haue forsak-  
 en all thyng for my loue to folow me, shall haue euer-  
 lastyng lyfe. Many noble and worthy men haue iusted  
 for the fayre doughter, that is to saye, haue foughten  
 bothe by see & by lande for thys worlde for couetyse of  
 worldly rycheffe, & at the last there be many slayne, for  
 there is nothing here but pryde of lyfe, couetyse of eyen  
 or of the fleshe, where thzugh all the worlde is put to  
 great myschefe. But he that weddeth the fayre dough-  
 ter, that is þe worlde, is he that setteth all hys affectyon  
 & desyre in the wrecchednes of thys worlde, & wyl not  
 for nothyng forsake thys worlde, lyke a wretche & coue-  
 tous man. But he that weddeth the foule doughter, is  
 a good chrysten man, whych for the loue of þe kyngdom  
 of henē forsaketh all this worlde, & not onely doth thus  
 but also despyseth hymselfe, bodyly obeyinge vnto his  
 soueraynes in all thyng. Suche a man certaynly shall  
 optayne the Empyre of heuen. Unto the whyche Iesu  
 Chryst byyng bothe you and me. Amen.

Somtyme in Rome dwelled a myghty emperour  
 named Andromyke, whych aboue all thyng lo-  
 ued melody. Thys Emperour had wythin hys castell a  
 well of suche vertue, that who so euer were dronken &  
 drank of the water of that well, holde incontynent be-  
 fresthe agayn, & be deliuered fro all maner of drōken-  
 nes. There was also dwellynge in thys Emperours  
 courte a myght named Pizony, whome þe Emperour  
 get. Ro, l. j. loued



loued moche, but oftentimes he was dronken, whych  
byce the emperour hated above all thynge. And whan  
thys knyght perceyued hymselfe dronken, than wolde  
he go to the well & drynke of the water & refreshe hym  
selfe, so that what so euer the Emperour sayde to hym  
he wolde answer hym so reasonably, that no dronke-  
nes myght be seen in hym, & for hys wytty answere he  
was greatly beloued of the Emperour. Neuerthelesse  
his felowes of the courte enuyd hym moche, & ymagy-  
ned amonge themselfe how they myght departe f. Em-  
perours loue fro hym. It fortunied on a daye that this  
Emperour went to the forest and herde a nyghtyngale  
syng so mercy, that oftentimes after he wolde ryl-  
erly in y. mornyng, & somtyme fro hys meate & walke  
to the wode for to heare the swetnes of her songe, wher-  
fore many of his men sayd amonge thesselfe. Our lord  
delyteth so moche in the nyghtyngales songe, that he  
recketh lytell of our profyte, in so moche y. thugh two  
thynge his loue is withdrawen fro vs, that is to say  
by y. drony the knyght & by the swete songe of the nygh-  
tyngale. Than sayd an olde knyght that was amonge  
them. Srys quod he, yf ye wyll do by my counseyle, I  
shall delyuer you of the knyght y. drony & of the nygh-  
tyngale wout hurte or deth. They sware & sayd, what  
so euer ye bydde vs do, we shal anone fulfyll w. all our  
herte. Whan thys knyght herde thys, wythin a whyle  
after he espyed this y. drony dronken, wherfore he locked  
fast y. well, & as thys knyght y. drony came to refreshe  
hymselfe, he founde y. well fast locked. The Emperour  
had a great mater to treate, wherfore in haste he sente  
for this knyght, bycause of hys great wysdom to haue  
hys counseyle. And whan he came befoze y. Emperour  
he

he was so drunken that he myght not ones moue hys  
tonge, neyther had wyffe, reason, nor vnderstandyng  
to answer the Emperour to hys mater. But whan the  
Emperour sawe thys, he was greatly greued, for so  
moche as he hated that vyce, wherfore he commaunded  
anothe that fro that day forth he sholde no more be seen  
wythout hys lande vpon payne of deth. Thys hearynge  
hys fomen greatly were gladdened, & sayd vnto the olde  
knyght. Now be we deliuered of thys knyght ydionp,  
there is no more to do but y we myght fynde the waye  
to be deliuered of the nyghtyngale, in whych the Em  
perour delyteth so moche. Than sayd thys olde knyght  
poure eares shall heare and poure eyes shall se that thys  
nyghtyngale shal be destroyed in shorte tyme. Not long  
after thys olde knyght espyed that y nyghtyngale fled  
to sit vpon a tree euery aboute the foresayd well, tohere  
as her make came & grendzed with her, neuer thelesse in  
the absence of her make she toke oftentymes an other  
make & dyd auoutry, & whan she had thus done, than  
wolde she descende to the well and bathe her selfe, that  
whan her make came, he sholde fele no sauour ne euill  
odour of y she had done. Whan y knyght had seen thys  
on a tyme he locked the well, & whan the nyghtyngale  
wolde haue descended to bathe her selfe after her auou  
try, she founde the well closed, wherfore she flewe vp to  
the tree agayne & mourned sore in her maner, & left of  
her swete songe. Than came her make & sawe that she  
had trespassed agaynst her nature, he returned agayne  
and in shorte tyme brought a great multitude of nygh  
tyngales whych flewe hys make, & tare her al to peeces.  
And thus was the wyse knyght put away & the nygh  
tyngale slayne, & the Emperour put from his pleasure

and solace suche as he was wonte to haue.  
**T**hyſ Emperour betokeneth our lord Jeſu Chryſt  
which loueth greatly the ſonge of perſp̄te deuocyon, for  
whan we praye we ſpeke to god, & whan we rede, god  
ſpeketh wyth vs. The well that was in ꝑ palays beto-  
keneth confellyon that is in the chyrche, therfore yf any  
man be dronken wyth synne, let hym drynke of ꝑ well  
of confellyon, & wythout doubte he ſhall be ſafe. Thyſ  
ydrony betokeneth euery man that wyllfully returneth  
agayne to synne after his confellyon, lyke as a dogge ꝑ  
maketh a bomyte & caſteth out the meate that he hath  
eaten afore, & after whā he is hungry cometh & eateth  
it agayne. Neuertheleſſe yf a man ꝑ hath ſynned thus  
wyll drynke of ꝑ well of confellyon, he ſhall receyue his  
gooſtly ſtrengthes. The nyghtyngale ꝑ ſate on the tree  
betokeneth the ſoule ꝑ ſytteth on ꝑ tree of holy doctryne  
And her ſonge betokeneth the ſoule that ſytteth on the  
tree in deuoute prayers to god. But thyſ ſoule dothe a-  
uoutry as oftentymes as ſhe conſenteth to synne. Ne-  
uertheleſſe yf ſhe renne to confellyon & bathe her in the  
water of contricion, god ſhall loue her. But her ſomen  
that be the fendes of hell ſeyng thyſ that god is ſo mer-  
cyfull, they ſtoppe the well of confellyon, that is to ſay,  
the mouthes of them that wolde chryue theſe ſelſe, wyth  
ſhame & drede of penaunce, that they dare not tell forth  
theyr synnes. And thus ben many exiled & put to deth  
euerlaſtyng. And therfore ſtudy we to bathe our lyfe in  
the well of confellyon wyth ꝑ water of contricion, and  
than may we be ſure to come to euerlaſtyng lyfe. Unto  
the whyche god brynge bothe yon and me. Amen.

**I**n Rome dwelled ſomtyme a myghty Emperoure  
named Narines, whyche had a myghty ſtronge cyte  
and

and strongly walled aboute, & a bell hangynge in the  
myddes of p̄yte, & whan so ever thys Emperour went  
to batayle wythout p̄yte, this bel sholde be ronge, but  
there sholde no man ryngge p̄ bell but a virgyn. Wythin  
shorte tyme after it befell that dragons & serpentes and  
many other venymous beestes entroyed moche peo-  
ple, so that p̄yte was almost destroyed, wherfore the  
states of the cyte went in one assent to the Emperour &  
sayd. Lorde what shall we do, lo our gyddes & our cyte  
is almost destroyed, & ye & we be in peryll to peryshe  
through these fell beestes that consume us, therfore take  
we good counseyle, or else we are but lost. Than sayde  
the Emperour, what saye you is best to be done in thys  
mater, and how may we best be defended. Thā answer-  
ed one of p̄ wysest & sayd. My lord heare my counseyle  
& do therafter, & ye shall not forthyne it, ye have quod  
he in your place a lyon, and set vp a croffe & hange thys  
lyon ther vpon wyth nayles, & whan other venymous  
beestes se hym thus hangynge on the croffe, they wyll  
drede, & so shall they forsake this cite, and we shall be in  
rest & ease. Than sayd p̄ Emperour, it pleaseth me well  
that he be hanged in saupnys of you. Than toke they p̄  
lyon & hange hym on the croffe fast nayled. And other  
lyons & venymous dragons came towarde the cyte &  
saw the lyon thus hangynge, they fledde awaye for  
drede, and durst come no nere.

¶ Thys emperour betokeneth the father of heuen, the  
cyte well walled w p̄ bell in p̄ myddes betokeneth the  
soule walled aboute w vertues. The bell betokeneth a  
cleve consyence that warneth a man to batayle whan  
he sholde fyght agaynst the denyll, that he myght arme  
hymselfe before w vertues. The virgyn p̄ sholde ryngge

this bell is reason. the whyche as a birgyn declineth  
 all to ryghtfull ciennes. The venynous dragon y bea-  
 reth fyze betokeneth the fleshe of man, whych beareth  
 the fyze of glorony & techery. y which hent Adam our  
 fore fathen whan he ate of the forbidden apple. The be-  
 nymous herles that porsened the men betokeneth the  
 fendes of hell which for y moost parte hath destroyed  
 mankynde. The gates of the cite betoken patriarches &  
 prophetes, whyche besought god of good conserle & re-  
 medy that mankynde might be saved. & anone it was  
 consyrted for the bestiracyon that a prync was chyned  
 shold be hangen vpon a cross. whiche to scrupure  
 sayng thus. Christ thus was crucified vpon a popul-  
 et non gens percat. That is to saye. It is thouesha  
 man to dye for the people. lest all folkes be perished.  
 Then to we the. Christ a brenghym on a crose. for the  
 tobych the deuyll dredeth a brenghym on a crose. And dare not  
 myght them. And thus by the grace of god charyten men  
 shall come to everlastyng blysse. whiche y which byrge  
 for he that for vs dyed on the rode tree. Amen.

In some dwelled fortyne a myghty Emperoure  
 land a dierfull named Menalar. which ordeined  
 forben to me. that what mysdoer were taken & put  
 in prison. if he myght escape & come to the emperours  
 palays, he shold be there safe for all maner felony, tres-  
 son, or any other trespass that he had done in his lyf.  
 It was not longe after that a knyght trewe-  
 red, wherfore he was take & put in a stronge & a darke  
 prison, where he lay longe tyme. & had no light but a  
 mytrel byndowen. where as shantelyght shone in that  
 dyghtned he in to cate the temple me afor was brought



hym by hys keper, toherfoze he mourned greatly and  
made great sorow that he was thus fast shette by fro  
the syght of men. Neuerthelesse whan the keper was  
gone there came dayly a nightyngale in at þe wyndowe  
& sange full sweetely, of whose songe this woful knyght  
oft tyme was fedde with ioye, & whā thys byrde sealed  
of her songe than wold she flye in to þe knyghtes bosom  
and there thys knyght fedde her many a day of the by-  
taye that god sente hym. It befell after on a day that  
this knyght was greatly desolate of cōfōrte. Neuerthe-  
lesse the byrde sat in his bosom eatyng nattes, & thus  
he sayd vnto the byrde. O good byrde I haue susteyned  
the many a day, what wylte thou gyue me now in my  
desolacyon to cōfōrte me, remembze the well that þat  
the creature of god, and I also, therfoze helpe me now  
in my great nede. Whan the byrde herde this, she fletwe  
forth from hys bosom, & raryed from hym thre dayes.  
But the thyrde day she came agayne, & brought in her  
mouth a precyous stode, & layde it in the knyghtes bo-  
some. And whan she had so done, she toke her flyght &  
flew from hym agayne. The knyght meruayled of þe  
stone & of the byrde, & therwyt he toke the stone in his  
hande & touched his gyues & fetters therwyt, & anone  
fell of all his fetters & chaynes wherw he was boude.  
And than he arose & touched the dozes of the pryson, &  
anone they opened, & so he escaped & ranne fast to þe Em-  
perours palays. Whan the keper of þe pryson perceyued  
thys, he blew a hoze thysle & repesd by al the folke of  
the cyte, & ledde them forth cryenge wpyth an hye voyce  
Lo the thefe is gone, folowe we hym al. And wtyth that  
he ranne befoze all his felowes toward the knyght, &  
whā he came nygh hym, þe knyght bent his bowe & dyd  
shote

thote an acoboe, wherib he smote the keper in þ lunges  
and ſewe hym, & than he came to þ palays, where as  
he founde ſocour accoꝝdyng to the lawe.

**T**hyſ Emperour betokeneth our loꝛde Jeſu Chꝛyſt  
whyche ordeyned a lawe that what myſdoer, that is to  
ſaye, what ſynner myght eſcape & come to the palays  
of holy chꝛyche thꝛugh confeſſyon and cōtricion. Holde  
ſynde there ppetuall ſocour & helpe. Thys knyght beto  
keneth euery ſynner that is taken in deedly ſynne, and  
iudged vnto the pꝛyſon of hell by þ lawe of god, & he is  
ſtraytly bounde w chaynes of ſynne, wherfoze he we  
peth & mourueth dayly foꝛ hys treſpace. The keper of  
thys pꝛyſon betokeneth the deuyl that kepeth ſuche a  
man harde boude in ſynne, & ſerueth hym w rꝛcheſſe &  
delytes of thys woꝛlde, that he ſholde not eſcape from  
hym. The byꝛde that ſyngeth ſo ſweetely betokeneth the  
voꝛce of heuen that ſayth to the ſynner. Reuertete re  
uertete ſunamitis. Turne agayne now turne agayne  
thou pꝛyſoner, that is to ſay, turne agayne thou ſynner  
and I ſhall receyue the to grace. Foꝛ whan mankynde  
was in limbo patꝛa whyche was a certayne pꝛyſon of  
hell befoze the cōmyng of Chꝛyſt. Than came a byꝛde  
that is to ſaye, the godhede bearyng wyth hym a ſtone  
that betokeneth our loꝛde Jeſu Chꝛyſt, accoꝝdyng to  
holy ſcripture ſaying. Ego ſū lapis. &c. I am a ſtone.  
The ſoule of Chꝛyſt deſcended to the godhede & brought  
wyth hym all man bynde out of the pꝛyſon of hell, ther  
foze yf any of vs be in the pꝛyſon of deedly ſynne, touche  
we our ſynnes wyth the ſtone, that is to ſaye, wyth the  
vertue of our loꝛde Jeſu Chꝛyſt by confeſſyon & contri  
cion, & than withouten doubte the chaynes of our ſynnes  
deyth by ſtone ſhall be broken & fall from vs, & þ doꝛs  
of

of heuenly grace shall be opened, and we shall optayne helpe & socour in the palays of þ̄ chyrche. And yf the keeper of þ̄ pryson, that is to saye, the deuyl whyche is the blower of the hozne of pryde, lechery, oz couetyse, sters bypony synners, than turne we agayne towarde hym manly & thote at him þ̄ arowe of penaunce, & withouten doubte he shall flee from vs. And thā by þ̄ grace of god we may optayne the palays of heuen. Unto þ̄ whyche bynge vs our lord Iesu Chyrst. Amen.

**T**here dwelled somtyme in Rome a myghty Emperour & a merciful named Eholypdes. It fortuned on a daye that thys Emperour walked vnto the forest, where as he mette sodeynly wyth a pooze man, & anone whan thys Emperour sawe hym, he was greatly moued wyth mercy & sayde. Good frende whens art thou. My souerayn lord quod he, I am yours & beigne in your lande, & now I am in great pouerte and nede. And than sayd the Emperour, yf I knewe that þe were true in every thyng, I sholde promote the to great ryches, therfore tell me what is thy name. My lord & he I am called Lencyulus, & I behote you my trowth & true seruyce, & yf I do other wyse I submyt me to you and to all maner of payne that ye can pnt me to. Whan the Emperour herde thys, he promoted hym anone vnto great rychesse, & anone after þe made hym a knyght & steward of hys lande. And whan he was thus exalted to rychesse & honour, he wared so proude þe he despyed them that were woorthyer than he, & despyed suche as were simple & pooze. It was not longe after that it befell that thys steward rode by a forest, where as he mette wyth the foster, & charged hym þe sholde make

ges. Ro. m. j. an

gef. 130.

m.j.

21

an hondzeth pyttes in the groude, and couer them ouer  
wyth grene grasse & smal bowes, that yf wyld beestes  
fortuned to go in the forest that waye, that they sholde  
than fall in, and so shold they be taken & brought to the  
Emperour. The foster answered & sayd, yz as ye haue  
sayd it shall be done. Not longe after it fortuned þ this  
Stewarde rode to thys forest agayne to se yf these pyttes  
were made, & as he rode he bethought hym how great  
a man & how myghty he was made, & how all thyng  
in þ Emprye obeyed to hym and was reoy at his wyll.  
And as he rode thus thynkyng, he sayd to hymselfe,  
There is no god saue onely I, and wyth that he smote  
hys horse wyth his spurres, & so depnly he fell in to one  
of þ depe pyttes that he had ordeyned befoze hymselfe  
for the wyld beestes, and for þ great depnes therof he  
myght not aryse agayne by no maner of crafte, wher-  
foze he mourned greatly. And anone after hym came a  
hūgry lyon and fell in to þ same pyt, & after the lyon an  
ape, and after þ ape a serpent. And whan the Stewarde  
was thus walled w these thre beestes, he was greatly  
moued, and dzed soze. There was that tyme dwelling  
in the cyte a pooze man named Guy, that had no good  
saue onely an asse, wherw dayly he caried stykes and  
fallen wode & fuche as he coude gete in þ forest, & those  
he brought to þ market and solde thē & in this wyse he  
susteyned hymselfe & hys wyfe as well as he myght.  
It fortuned that this pooze Guy went to this forest as  
he was wont, and as he came by þ depe pyt he herde a  
man crye & saye. O dere frende what art þ, for goddes  
sake helpe me, & I shall quyte the so well that þ shalte  
euier after be the better. Whan thys pooze Guy herde þ  
it was þ voyce of a man, he meruayled greatly, & stode  
still

styll on the pyttes bynke & sayd. Lo good frende I am  
come for þ hast called me. Than sayde the knyght, dere  
frende I am stewarde of all the Emperours landes, &  
thus by fortune I am fallen in to thys pyt, & here be w  
me thre beestes, that is to say, a lyon, an ape, & an hoz-  
ryble serpent, whych I drede moost of all, & I wote not  
of whych of them I shall be fyrst deuoured, therfore I  
praye the for goddes sake gete me a longe corde wher-  
wyth thou mayst drawe me out of this depe pyt, and I  
shall waraūt þ to make the ryche in all thyng for ever  
more here after, & but I haue þ rather helpe I shall be  
deuoured of these beestes. Than sayd this pooze Guy,  
I may full yll entende to helpe þ, for I haue nothyng  
to lyue on but that I gader wode, & cary it to þ market  
to sell, wherwyth I am susteyned, neuerthelesse I shall  
leue my labour & fulfyl thy wyl, & yf ye rewarde me not  
it shall be great hyndraunce to me & to my wyfe. Than  
the stewarde made a great othe and sayd that he wolde  
promote hym & al his to great rycheffe. Than sayd Guy  
yf thou wylt fulfyl thy promesse I shall do yf ye byd me  
And with that went agayn to the cyte & brought with  
hym a longe rope & came to þ pyt & sayd. Syr stewarde  
lo I let downe a rose to the, bynde thyselke aboute the  
myddle therwyth, that I may pull the vp. Than was  
the steward glad & sayd. Good frende let downe þ rope.  
And with þ he cast the ende of the rope downe into the  
pyt. And whan the lyon sawe that, he caught the rope  
& helde it fast, & Guy drewe þ lyon vp, wenyng to hym  
he had drawen vp the stewarde, & whan he had so done  
the lyon thanked hym in his maner & ranne to þ wode.  
The seconde tyme this Guy let downe the rope, the ape  
lepte to it & caught it fast, & whan he was drawen vp



he thanked Guy as he coude & ranne to the wode. The  
thyrde tyme he let downe the rope & dzeue bp þ serpent.  
whiche thanked hym & went to þ wode. The steward  
cryed wyth an hye voyce. O dere frende now am I de-  
lyuered of thre venymous beestes, now let downe the  
corde to me, that I may come bp. And thys pooze Guy  
let downe the rope, & the steward boude hymselfe fast  
abouthe the myddle, & anon Guy dzeue hym bp. And  
whan he was thus holpe he sayde to Guy. Come to me  
at thye of the clocke to the palays, & than I shall make  
the ryche for euer. Thys pooze Guy reioyced therof, &  
went home wythout ony rewarde. Than hys wyfe de-  
maunded hym why he gadered no wode wherw they  
myght lyue that day. Than tolde he her all the processe  
as it befell, how the steward fell in to þ pyt, & also the  
lyon, the ape, & the serpent, that he had made in þ sayd  
forest, & how he had holpen hym out wyth a corde & sa-  
ued hym from deuouryng of þ thre venymous beestes  
& how he sholde go to the steward & sethe hys rewarde  
on þ morowe. Whan hys wyfe herde this, she reioyced  
greatly and sayd. Yf it shall be so, good syr aryse to mo-  
rowe at a due houre & go to the palays & receyue your  
rewarde, that we may be confortyd therby. So in the  
mornyng Guy arose & wente to þ palays & knocked at  
the gate. Than came the porter & asked the cause of his  
knockyng. I praye the quod this Guy go to þ steward  
and sape to hym that here abydeth a pooze man at the  
gate that spake wyth hym yesterday in the forest. The  
porter went in & tolde the steward as þ pooze man had  
sayd. Than sayd the steward, go thou agayne and tell  
hym that he lyeth, for yesterday spake I wyth no man  
in the forest, & charge hym that he go hys waye, & that

He hym there neuer after. The porter went forth and  
tolde pooze Guy how the steward had sayd, & charged  
hym to go his waye. Than was this Guy sorowfull &  
wente home, & whan he came home he tolde hys wyfe  
how the steward answered hym. Hys wyfe comforted  
hym in al that she myght & sayde. Syr go ye agayne &  
proue hym thyse. Than on þe morow this Guy arose &  
went to the palays agayne, praying the porter ones to  
do hys erande agayn to the steward. Than the porter  
answered & sayd, gladly I wyl do thyne erande, but I  
drede me soze that it shall be thy hurte. And than went  
he in & tolde þe steward of þe comynge of thys pooze mā  
Whan þe steward herde that, he went out & all to bette  
thys sely Guy, & lefte hym in peryll of deth. Whan hys  
wyfe herde thys, she came w her asse & ledde hym home  
as she myght, & all þe had she spent vpon surgens  
& phisyciens to helpe hym. And whan he was perfyty  
hole, he went to the forest as he was wont for to gader  
stykkes & small wode for hys lpyunge. And as he went  
aboute in that forest he sawe a stronge lyon, dreyunge  
before hym asses that were charged w chaffer and mar  
chaundyse. Thys lyon droue forth the asses before Guy  
whyche dred soze the lyon lest he wold haue deuoured  
hym, neuerthelesse whan he behelde the lyon better, he  
knewe well that he was the same lyon þe drewe out  
of the pyt. This lyon lefte not Guy tyll all þe asses with  
the marchaundyse were entred in to hys hous, and than  
the lyon dyd hym obeysaunce & ranne to þe wode. Thys  
Guy obteyned these fardels and founde great ryche  
therin, wherfore he made to pclayme in dpuerle chyr  
ches yf ony man had lost suche goodes, but there was  
none that chalenged them. And whan Guy sawe thys

he toke the goodes, bought therewith hous & lande, &  
so was made ryche. Neuerthelesse he haüted the forest  
as he dyd before. And after þas he walked in the forest  
to gader wode he espyed the ape in the top of a tree, the  
whyche brake bowes besyly with her tethe & clawes, &  
threwe them dowue, so that in shorte tyme Guy had la-  
den hys asse. And whan the ape had so done, she wente  
her waye, & Guy went home. And on the morowe Guy  
went to the forest agayne, & as he sate byndyng hys sa-  
gottes, he sawe the serpent that he drew out of the pyt  
come towarde hym, bearyng in hys mouth a pprecious  
stone of thre colours, the whych stone þe serpent let fall  
at Guyes fete, and whā she had so done, she kyssed hys  
fete & wente her waye. Thys Guy toke vp the stone, &  
meruayled greatly of what vertue it myght be, wher-  
fore he arose vp and went to a seller of pprecious stones  
named Peter, & sayd. Dere brother I praye the tell me  
the vertue of this pprecious stone, & I shal rewarde the  
well for thy labour. Whā thys stone seller had well be-  
holden and vnderstode the nature of this stone, he sayd  
Good frende yf the lyst to sell thy stone, I shal gyue the  
an. C. marke. Than sayd Guy, I wyll not sell my stone  
tyll thou tell me truly the vertue therof. Than sayd the  
marchaunt, wythout doubte thys stone hath thre ver-  
tues, the fyrst vertue is thys, that who so beareth thys  
stone vpon hym, shal haue ioye wythout sorowe, the se-  
conde vertue is, that he shal haue plente wout defaute  
the thyrde vertue is, he shal haue lyght wout darkness  
and it hath also another vertue, that no man may sel it  
but for as moche as it is worth & yf he do the contrary  
the stone returneth agayn to þe fyrst owner. Whan Guy  
herde thys, he was ryght ioyful, & sayd to hymselfe, in  
a good

a good houre I drew these beestes out of the pyt. Not  
longe after it befell that this Guy by the vertue of this  
stone was made passyng ryche, & bought great posses-  
syons & lynesode, wherfore it in a whyle he was made  
knyght. It was not longe after þe emperour had know-  
lege how syz Guy had a stone of suche vertue, wherfore  
he sent for syz Guy, comaundyng hym to come to hym  
in all haste, & so he dyd. And whan syz Guy was come  
to þe emperour, the Emperour sayd to hym. My frende  
I haue herde say that somtyme thou were in great po-  
uerte, & now art made ryche by þe vertue of a lytel stone  
therfore I praye the that thou sell me that stone. Syz  
Guy answered and sayde, þe may I not do, for so longe  
as I haue that stone I am sure of thre thynges, that is  
to saye, of ioye without sorowe, plente wout defaute, &  
lyght wout derknes. Whan the Emperour herde thys  
he had greater desyre to bye that stone than he had be-  
fore, & sayd. Syz Guy of two thynges thou must chose  
one, that is, chose whether thou wilt forsake thys em-  
pyre and all thy kynrede, or else sell me thy stone. Than  
sayd syz Guy. My lord yf it must nedes be thus, be it  
at your wyll, neuer thelesse I shall tell you the peryll of  
thys stone, yf ye paye not therfore as it is worth, wout  
doubte it wyll come to me agayn. Than sayd þe Empe-  
rour, sothly I shall gyue the suffycient, for thou shalt  
receyue of me therfore a thousande pounde, & so it was  
done, syz Guy receyued the money & wente home. On þe  
morrow erly he opened his cofer and foude the stone, &  
than he tolde to the lady his wyfe how he had solde the  
stone to þe Emperour and deliuered it, & how he foude  
it agayn in his cofer. Than sayd his wyfe, good syz in  
all þe haste ye can go agayne to the Emperour and take  
hym

þe Emperour & his wyfe

þe Emperour & his wyfe

hym the stone, for drede that he be not wroth, & throught  
malyce put some fraude in vs. Than wente forth syz  
Guy agayne to the Emperour & sayd to hym, My lord  
yesterday I solde you a stone, & whyche yf it please you  
I wolde fayne se. The Emperour went for the stone to  
hys treasour & foude it not, wherfore he was ryght so-  
rowfull, & came agayn & tolde syz Guy how it was lost  
Than sayd syz Guy, My lord greue you not, for I told  
you yesterday that I myght not sell it but yf I had the  
alue therof, & yesterday I receyued a thousand poude  
of you therfore, & this day I foude it in my cofer agayn  
and therfore yf I had not brought you the stone agayn  
peradenture ye wold haue shewed me your heuy lord-  
shipp, & wyth that he shewed forth the stone, wher at the  
Emperour meruayled greatly & sayd, Syz Guy by thy  
trouth that thou owest to me tell me how thou camest  
by thys stone. Than sayd syz Guy, By my fayth that I  
owe to you I shall tell you & very trouth as touchynge  
thys stone. Your steward that is promoted by of nought  
let make many depe pyttes in your forest, & it fortunyd  
not longe after that he fell downe in to one of them hym  
selfe, & myght not ryle agayne for depnesse of the pyt, it  
fortunyd also the same daye that a lyon, an ape & a ser-  
pent fell in to the pyt w hym, that tyme was I a poore  
man, & as I walked in to the forest wyth myne alle for  
to gather wode he cryed to me that I shoulde helpe hym  
out of the pyt, & saue hym fro deth, for there were in the  
pyt wyth hym thre benymous beestes, that is to saye,  
a lyon, an ape, & a foule serpent, & than he behyght me  
by mouth to promote me & all my kynne to great rycheesse  
And whan I herde that, I was glad, and let downe a  
corde, supposyng to haue drawen by hym, & than I ha-

led



led by a lyon, & after that an ape, & than a serpent, and  
at the last your steward. The lyon gaue me ten asses  
charged w<sup>th</sup> marchaundysse, the ape gaue me as moche  
woode as myne asse myght beare, & the serpent gaue me  
this stone y<sup>e</sup> I haue solde you, but your steward better  
me & wounded me so soze for my good dede, that I was  
borne home vpon myne asse. When y<sup>e</sup> Emperour herde  
thys, hys herte was greatly moued agaynst y<sup>e</sup> steward  
wherfore he examyned hym of that false dede, but he  
was dombe & wolde not speke, for so moche y<sup>e</sup> he coulde  
not deny his falschode. Than sayd y<sup>e</sup> Emperour. O thou  
wretched creature, vnrasonable bestes, as the lyon,  
the ape, & the serpent rewarded hym for hys good dede  
and thou that art a reasonable man hast almost beaten  
hym to deth that saued the and toke the out of the pryt,  
therfore for thy falschode & wyckednes I iudge the to be  
hanged this daye on the galowes, and all thy goodes &  
landes I graunte to sy<sup>r</sup> Guy, & also I ordeyne that sy<sup>r</sup>  
Guy shall occupie thy place and be steward, and so it  
was done, When sy<sup>r</sup> Guy was thus rewarded by the  
Emperoure and made steward, he was well beloued  
of enery man as longe as he lyued, and at y<sup>e</sup> last ended  
hys lyfe wyth honour and good peace.

¶ Thys emperour betokeneth the father of heuen, the  
pooze man betokeneth euery mā that cometh in to this  
worlde feble & naked from his mothers bely, & at y<sup>e</sup> last  
is promoted to great rycheesse & worldly honour, as the  
psalmyst sayth. Destitute erigens pauperē. God lyf-  
teth by the pooze man out of fylthe, & many suche men  
knowe neyther god ne the selfe, but cause to make depe  
pyttes, that is to saye, vnkynednes and malice, they or-  
derne agaynst simple men, in the whiche pryt y<sup>e</sup> deuyll  
playes ges. lko. n. s. causeth

causeth them ofte to fall, accordyng to a texte in Eccle  
siastico. Mouea qui alteri facit, ipse incidit in ea. That  
is to saye, who maketh a pyt to an other man, oft tyme  
he falleth therin hym selfe, whyche texte was well pro  
ued by Harbouchens. Thys Guy that went daily to þ  
fozest w his asse to gader wode betokeneth euery ryght  
full man, dzedying god in þ fozest of this woꝛlde, þ wode  
that he gadereth betokeneth his mery ioyous werkes  
that he carryeth on hys asse, whyche betokeneth þ body  
of man, wherwith his soule may ioye & lyue in þ taber  
nacle of heuē. And as the steward, the lyon, the ape &  
the serpent that fell in to the pyt, ryght so whan a syn  
full man falleth in þ pyt of synne. The lyō of þ kynrede  
of Jude (that is Jesu Chryst) descendeth with hym as  
ostentymes as the synner hath wyll to come to grace.  
Therefore sayth the psalmyst. Cum tpsolū in tribu  
lacione. That is to saye, I am with hym in tribulaciō.  
Thys Guy draweth bp þ lyon, þ is to say Jesu Chryst  
out of the pyt by the rope of vertues. He dzeue bp þ ape  
also, that is to say contrary wyll to reason, þ he myght  
obey to reason. For of all maner bestes the ape is most  
lyke to man, ryght so amonge all the strengthes of the  
soule wyll ought to be lykened vnto reason, and to obey  
reason. He dzeue bp also a serpēt, by the whych is vnder  
stande penaunce for two causes. For the serpent bea  
reth in hys mouth venym, and his taylor is a medycyn  
ryght so penaunce beareth at the begynnynge bytter  
nes to the doer, neuerthelesse it is full swete & medicy  
nable vnto the soule at þ ende, & therfore euery ryght  
wysse man shoulde drawe to hym the serpent of penaunce.  
And at the last he dzeue bp the steward from the pyt of  
synne, accordyng to Chrystes saying. I am not come  
onely

onely to call ryghtwylse men, but synners to penaunce.  
Also it is wyrtten that Seneca whyche taught an Em-  
perour many lozes & vertues of trewth, and at the last  
lyke thys steward caused to slee his mayster Seneca.  
Also Chryst gaue power to Judas to werke myracles,  
lyke as he dyd to other dyscyples, neuerthelesse he be-  
trayed hym at the last. Wight so now a dayes be many  
chyl dren of Belial whych delyte moze to do harme thn  
good, in especyall to them y wolde teche them perfyty  
bothe for the soule & for the body. The lpon gaue to the  
ryghtwylse man. x. asses charged with marchaundysse,  
that is to saye, our lord Iesu Chryst gyueth to euery  
ryghtwylse man. x. comaundementes charged wth ver-  
tues, by the whyche he groweth to y rycheffe of heuen.  
The ape also gadereth hym wode as ofte as the ryght-  
full mā werketh wylfull y dedes of charite. For wode  
is profytable for two thynges, that is to saye, to make  
fyre & to buylde houses. Wight so ppre charite heateth  
the aungell, accor dyng to scripture, saying. Quia ma-  
gis gaudiū est angelis. &c. That is to say. Moze ioye is  
to aungels for one synner doyng penaunce. &c. Charite  
also reyleth the hous of heuen agaynst the cōmynge of  
the soule. The serpent also gaue hym a stone of thre dy-  
uerse colours, the whyche betokeneth our lord Iesu  
Chryst, whome we seke by penaunce. Therefore sayth  
saynt Jerome in the seconde table thus. Post naufra-  
giū est p̄miū. That is to saye. We holde do penaunce  
after our trespase. That Chryst is a stone, may be pro-  
ued by hymselfe, saying thus. Ego sum lapis biuus.  
That is to saye. I am a lpyng stone. Chryst hath thre  
colours, whyche betokeneth y myght of the father, the  
wysdome of the sone, & the makenes of the holy goost.



hys dreame, chargyng them to tell hym the sognyfyenge  
therof vpon payne of deeth, & yf they tolde hym the true  
interpretacyon therof, he behygght them great rewarde  
Than sayd they. Dere lord, we tell ys your dreame, and we  
shall declare vnto you what it betokeneth. That y<sup>e</sup> Em-  
perour tolde them fro the begynnynge to the endynge  
as it is afoze sayd. Whan the phylosophers herde thys  
wyth a glad chere they answered & sayd. Lord y<sup>e</sup> dreame  
that ye sawe betokeneth good, for the Empryze shall be  
more clerer than it is. The more that is more pale on y<sup>e</sup>  
one syde than on y<sup>e</sup> other betokeneth the Emprysse, that  
hath lost parte of her colour thzugh the concepyon of a  
sone y<sup>e</sup> she hath conceyued. The lytell byrde betokeneth  
the sone that she shall beare. The two beestes that fedde  
thys byrde betokeneth all the wyse men & ryche men of  
this Empryze shall obey thy sone. These other beestes y<sup>e</sup>  
bowed theyr heedes to the byrde betokeneth that many  
other nacyōs shall do hym homage. The byrde y<sup>e</sup> songe  
so sweetely to thys lytell byrde betokeneth y<sup>e</sup> Romayns  
whyche shall reioyce and synge bycause, of this byrthe.  
Lo this is y<sup>e</sup> very interpretacyon of your dreame. Whan  
the Emperour herde this, he was right ioyful. Soone  
after that the Emprysse trauayled & was deliuered of  
a farge sone, in whose birth was great ioye made wout  
ende. Whan y<sup>e</sup> kyng of Amplur herde thys, he thought  
in hymselfe thus. Lo I haue warred agaynst the Em-  
perour all the dayes of my lyfe, and now he hath a sone  
the whych wyll reuenge all thys wronges that I haue  
done & wrought agaynst his father whan he cometh to  
full age, therfore it is better that I sende to the Empe-  
rour and beseeche hym of trespase & peace, that hys sone  
may haue nothyng agaynst me whan he cometh to



manhode. Whā he had thus sayd to hymselfe, he wrote  
vnto the Emperoure, besechyng hym to haue peace.  
Whan the Emperour sawe that the kynge of Amplay  
wrote to hym more for drede than for loue, he wrote a-  
gayne to hym, that yf he wolde fynde good & sufficient  
surety to kepe the peace, & bynde hymselfe all the days  
of hys lyfe to do hym seruyce & homage, & to gyue hym  
perely a certayne tpybute, he wolde receyue hym to the  
peace. Whan the kynge had redde the tenour of þe Em-  
perours lēttes, he called his counseyle, prayng the to  
gyue hym counseyle how he myght best do as touchyng  
thys mater. Than sayd they. It is good that ye obey þe  
Emperours wyll & cōmaundement in all thynges. For  
in the fyrst he despyeth of you surety for the peace, & as  
to thys we answer thus. Ye haue but a doughter, and  
the Emperoure but a sone, wherfore let a maryage be  
made bytwene them, & þe may be a perpetuall spkerne  
of þe peace. And also he asketh homage & rentes whych  
is good to fulfyll. And than the kynge sente hys mes-  
sengers to the Emperour, sayinge that he wyll fulfyll his  
entēt in al thyng, yf it myght please his hyghnes that  
his sone & the kynges doughter myght be wedded togy-  
der. All thys pleased well the Emperour, neuerthelesse  
he sente agayne, that yf his doughter were a clene byr-  
gyn from her byrth vnto that daye, he wolde consent to  
that maryage. Than was the kyng ryght glad, for his  
doughter was a clene byrgyn. Therfore whā þe lēttes  
of cōuenauntes & spkerne were sealed, the kynge dyd  
do make araye a fayre Shyppe, wherin he myght sende  
hys doughter with many noble knyghtes, ladyes and  
great rycheſſe vnto the Emperour for to haue hys sone  
in maryage. And whan they were saylynge in the see  
towards

towarde Rome, a storme arose so feruently & so horribly  
that the shyppe al to brast agaynst a rocke of stone, and  
they were all drowned saue onely þe yonge lady, whych  
set her hope & her herte so greatly on god, that she was  
saured. And aboute thye of the flocke the tempest seaced,  
and the lady droue forth ouer the waves in that broke  
shyppe whych was cast vp agayn, but an huge whale  
folowed after, redy to deuoure bothe the shyppe & her,  
wherforz thys fayre yonge lady whan nyght came she  
smote fyre wyth a stone, wherw the shyppe was great-  
ly lychtned, & than þe wale durst not auenture towarde  
the shyppe for drede of the lycht. At the cocke crowynge  
thys yonge lady was so wery of the great tempest and  
trouble of the see that she slepte, & wythin a lytel whyle  
the fyre was out, & than came þe whale & deuoured her  
And whan she wakened and vnderstode her selfe in the  
whales bely she smote fyre, & wythin a lytell whyle she  
wounded the whale wyth a knyfe in many places, and  
whan þe whale felte hymselfe wounded, accordynge to  
hys nature began to swimme to lade. There was that  
tyme dwellyng in that countree an erle that was a noble  
man named Pryrys, the whych bycause of recreacyon  
walked by the see strande, & as he was walkyng thus  
he sawe wher as the whale was comynge towarde þe  
lande, wherfoze he returned home agayne, & gadered  
many stronge men & women & came thyder agayne, &  
fought wyth thys whale, & wounded hym soze, and as  
they smote the mayden that was in hys bely cryed w a  
hye voyce & sayd. O gentyll syz haue mercy & compas-  
syon on me, for I am a kynges doughter & a true virgyn  
from the houre of my byrth vnto thys daye. Whan the  
erle herd thys he wondred greatly, & opened the syde of  
the

the whale & founde the ponge lady, & toke her out. And  
whan she was thus deliuered, she tolde hym forthw  
by ordre whose daughter she was, & how she had lost  
all her goodes in the see, & how she shoulde haue ben ma  
rried vnto the Emperours sone. And whan perle herde  
thys he was ryght glad, wherfore he comforted her the  
more, & kepte her styll wyth hym tyll she was well re  
freshed. And in the meane tyme he sente messengers to  
the Emperoure, lettynge hym wyte how thys kynges  
daughter was saued. Than was the Emperour ryght  
glad of her saluacyon & comynge, & had great compassyon  
on her, saying. A good mayde for þe loue of mi sone thou  
hast suffred moche woo, neuerthelesse yf thou be wo  
thy to be hys wyfe, soone shall I proue. And whan he  
had thus sayd, he let bynge forth thre vessels, the fyrst  
was made of pure golde well couched wyth pprecious  
stones wythout & win, full of deed mennes bones, and  
thervpon was wyrtten thys posey. Who so choseth me  
shall fynde that he deserueth. The seconde vessel was  
made of fyne syluer, fylled wyth erth & woꝝmde, and þe  
superscripcyon was thus. Who so choseth me, shall  
fynde that hys nature desyꝛeth. The thyrde vessel was  
made of lede, full wythin of pprecious stones, and ther  
vpon was wyrtten thys posey. Who so choseth me, shall  
fynde that god hath disposed for hym. These thre ves  
sels the Emperour shewed to the mayden and sayd. Lo  
here daughter, these be noble vessels, yf thou chose one  
of these wherin is profyte to the & to other, than shalt  
thou haue my sone. And yf thou chose that wherin is  
no profyte to the nor to none other, sothly thou shalt not  
wedde hym. Whan the mayden sawe thys, she lyfte up  
her handes to god & sayd. Thou lord whych knowest  
all

all thynges, graunte me grace thys houre so to chose  
that I may receyue the Emperours sone. And w<sup>h</sup> that  
she behelde the fyrst vessel of golde whych was forged  
and grauen royally, and redde thys scripture. Who so  
chofeth me, &c. sayinge thus. Though thys vessel be  
full p<sup>re</sup>cious and made of pure golde, neuerthelesse I  
knowe not what is wythin, therfoze my dere lord this  
vessel wyll I not chose. And than behelde she the se-  
conde vessel that was of clere syluer, & redde the super-  
scriptyon, who so chofeth me, shall fynde that hys na-  
ture desyreth. Thynkyng thus wythin her selfe, yf I  
chose thys vessel, what is wythin I knowe not, but  
well I wote there shall I fynde that nature desyreth,  
and my nature desyreth the lust of the fleshe, and ther-  
foze thys vessel wyll I not chose. Whan she had seen  
those two vessels & gyuen an answer as touchyng to  
them, she behelde the thyrde vessel of lede, & redde the  
superscriptyon, who so chofeth me, shall fynde that god  
hath disposed. Thynkyng within her selfe, thys vessel  
is not passyng ryche ne p<sup>re</sup>cious without forth, neuer-  
thelesse p<sup>er</sup> superscriptyon sayth, who so chofeth me, shall  
fynde p<sup>er</sup> god hath dysposed, & without doubte god neuer  
disposed ony harme, therfoze as now I wyll chose this  
vessel. Whā the Emperour sawe thys he sayd. O good  
mayden open thy vessel, for it is ful of p<sup>re</sup>cious stones  
and se yf p<sup>er</sup> hast well chosen or no. And whā thys ponge  
lady had opened it, she fonde it full of golde & p<sup>re</sup>cious  
stones, lyke as the Emperour had tolde her afore. And  
than sayd the emperour. O my dere doughter bycause  
thou hast wysely chosen, therfoze shalt thou wedde my  
sone. And whan he had so sayd, he ordeyned amaryage  
and wedded them woz they togpyder wyth moche ioye

and honour, & so continued to theyr lynnes ende.

**T**hyſ Emperour betokeneth the father of heuen the whyche was longe tyme wythout a carnall ſonne, wherefore many men were perſſhed and wente to hell. The Emperreſſe conceived whan the aungell Gabryell ſayd, Lo thou ſhalte conceive & beare a chyld. And than the ſymamēt began to clere whan this lytell chylde lyghtned y worlde wyth his byrth. The more than began to were pale whan the face of y byrgyn Mary was ouer ſhadowed by vertue of the grace of the holy goost, & not onely her face was thus ſhadowed, but alſo her body for ſhe was great w chyld as an other woman, wherefore Joſeph wold haue forſaken her pryncely and gone away. The lyttell byrde that came from the one ſyde of the mane betokeneth our lord Jeſu Chryſt, whych at mydnyght was bozne of our lady, wrapped in clothes and layde in an ore ſtall. The two beettes betokeneth y ore & the aſſe that Joſeph brought wyth hym, whyche honoured hym in hys byrthe. Theſe other beettes that came from farre betokeneth the herdes in the felde, to whome the aungell ſayd thus. Ecce nuncio vobis gaudium magnū. Lo I ſhewe to you great ioye. The byrdes that ſonge ſo ſweteſly betokeneth the aungells of heuen whyche ſonge at his byrth thys mery ſonge. Gloria in excelsis. Ioye to god aboue, and peace to men in erth. The kynge of Amptur whyche helde warre agaynſt y Emperour betokeneth al mankynde, that was contrary to god as longe as he was in the deuyls power. But anon whā our lord Jeſu Chryſt was bozne he bowed hymſelfe to god, & beſought hym of peace whan he receyued hys baptym, for at our baptiſyng we behote ſo drawe onely to god, & forſake y deuyll & all his pompes.

Thys



This kynge gaue hys doughter in marpage to þe Em-  
perours sone. Ryght so eche of vs ought to geue hys  
soule in marpage to goddes sone, for he is euer redy to  
receyue our soule to his spoule, accordyng to scripture  
saying. Responsabo ipsam mihi. I shall spouse her  
to me. But or the soule may come to þe palays of heuen  
her behoueth to sayle by þe see of this worlde in þe shyppe  
of good lyfe, but oftentimes there aryseth a tempest in  
the see, that is to saye, the trouble of thys worlde, the  
temptacyon of the fleshe, & the suggestyon of the deuyl  
aryseth sodenly & drowneþ the vertues that þe soule  
receyueþ at the font stone, neuerthelesse yet falleth she  
not out of þe shyppe of charite, but kepeth her selfe sure-  
ly therein by fayth & hope. For as þe apostle sayth. Spe-  
salui facti sumus. By hope we be saued. For it is impos-  
sible to be saued wout hope or fayth. The great whale  
that folowed the mayden betokeneth þe deuyl, whyche  
by nyght and by daye lyeth in a wayte to ouercome the  
soule by synne, therfore do we as dyd þe mayden, smyte  
we fyre of charite & loue out of the stone, that is Chryst  
accordyng to hys saying. Ego sū lapis. I am a stone.  
And certaynly the deuyl shall haue no power to greue  
vs. Many men begyn well as dyd þe mayde, but at the  
last they be wery of theyr good werkes, & so slepe they  
in synne. And anone whan the deuyl perceyueth thys  
he deuoureth the synner in euyl thoughtes, delytes,  
consent & werke. Therfore yf any of vs sele our selfe in  
suche lyfe vnder the power of the deuyl, let hym do as  
the mayde dyd, smyte the deuyl woth the knyfe of byt-  
ter penauce, than kyndell the fyre of charite, & without  
doubte he shall cast the on þe londe of good lyfe. The erle  
that came woth hys seruauntes to see the whale beto-  
o.ij. keneth

keneth a discrete confessor, whych dwelleth besyde the  
see, that is to say, besyde the worlde, & not in þ worlde,  
that is to saye, not drawyng to worldly delectacions,  
but euer is redy wryth good wordes of holy scripture to  
flee the denyland destroye his power, we must all crye  
wryth an hye voyce as dyd thys mayden, knowlegynge  
our synnes, & than shall we be deliuered from þ deuyl  
and nourysched wryth good werkes. The Emperoure  
sheweth thys mayden thre vessels, that is to saye, god  
putteth before man lyfe & deth, good & euyl, & whych  
of these that he choseth he shall optayn. Therfore sayth  
Sampson. Ante hominē mors et vita. Deth and lyfe  
is set before man, chose whych hym lyst. And yet man  
is vncertain whether he be worthy to chose lyfe before  
deth. By the fyrst vessel of golde full of deed mennes  
bones we shall vnderstande worldly men, as myghty  
men & ryche, whych outward shyneth as golde in ry-  
cheffe & pompes of thys worlde. Neuerthelesse wrythin  
they be full of deed mennes bones, that is to saye, the  
werkes þ they haue wrought in thys worlde ben deed  
in þ syght of god though deedly synne. Therfore yf ony  
man chose suche lyfe, he shall haue þ he deserueth, that  
is to saye, hell. And suche men be lyke tounbes that be  
whyte & royally paynted & arayed wrythout, & couered  
wryth cloth of golde & sylke, but wryn there is nothyng  
but dye bones. By þ seconde vessel of syluer we ought  
to vnderstande the Justices & wyse men of thys worlde  
whych shyne in fayre speche, but wrythin they be full  
of wormes and erth, that is to saye, theyr fayre speche  
shall auayle them no more at þ day of dome than wo-  
mes or erth, and peradventure lesse, for than shall they  
suffre eueryday payne, yf they dye in deedly synne.

By

By the thyrde beſſell of lede full of golde and peryous  
ſtones we ought to vnderſtande a ſymple lyfe & a pooze  
whych the choſen men choſe, that they may be wedded  
to our bleſſed lord Jeſu Chryſt by humilite and obey-  
ſaunce, & ſuche men beare wyth them peryous ſtones  
that is to ſaye, merytorious werkes pleaſynge to god  
by the whych at þ daye of dome they be wedded to our  
lord Jeſu Chryſt & optayne þ herptage of heuen, vnto  
the whych bynge vs he, þ dyed on þ rode tree. Amen.

**S**omtyme in Rome dwelled a myghty Empe-  
rour named Calopodu, whych wedded a fayre  
lady to hys wyfe, they were not longe togyder but that  
thys Emperreſſe cōceyued and bare hym a ſone a goodly  
chylde and a fayre, & whan he was of age he was ſet  
to ſcole. And whā he came to .xx. yere of age he deſyred  
hys fathers herptage, ſayinge. Dere father ys are an  
olde man, & may not gouerne your Emprre, therfore  
yf it pleaſe you to gyue it me, it ſhal be to your proſpſe.  
Than answered the Emperour and ſayd. Dere ſone I  
dzede me ſore that whan the Emprre is in thy power  
thou wylte not fulfyll my wyll ne my deſyre. Than an-  
ſwered the emperreſſe (for ſo moche as ſhe loued her ſone  
better than her huſbande) and ſayd. My lord quod ſhe  
that may not be, for thou haſt but one ſone, & therfore  
as I byleue he wyll fulfyll thyn entent in all thyng,  
and thys Emprre may helpe hym well, & therfore it is  
beſt to graunte hym the Emprre. Than answered the  
Emperour and ſayd. I wyll fyrſt haue of hym a lettre  
obligatory, that whan ſo euer he dothe ony thyng a-  
gaynſt my wyll, that than I ſhall depryue hym of the  
Emprre wythout ony withſtandynge. The ſone graū-  
o. iij. ted

ted to thys, & let make the obligacyon, & sealed it. And  
tohan this was done, thys yonge Emperour waxed so  
proude, that he dredded neyther god nor man, & dyd very  
moche harme. But euer his father suffred it pacyently  
for he wold not be corrected by no man. Tyll at the last  
there fell a great derthe in that Empyre, so that many  
men dyed for defaute. Thys olde Emperoure was by  
hymselfe & began to haue nede, wherfore he wente to  
his sone for to haue some sustenance, whych his sone  
graunted & suffred for a whyle. But wrythin shorte tyme  
hys father began to ware speke, wherfore he called his  
sone, and prayed hym to gyue hym a draught of muste.  
Hys sone answered & sayd, That wyll I not do, for my  
muste is not good for thy complettyon. Than sayd the  
Emperour, I praye the sone gyue me a draught of thy  
wyne. His sone answered and sayd that he wolde haue  
none, for my wyne is not yet fyned, & yf I touche it, it  
wyll trouble, and therfore I wyll not broche it tyll it be  
clere & fyned. Than sayd hys father, Gyue me some of  
thy seconde tonne. That wyl I not do quod he, for that  
wyne is passynge myghty & stronge, & suche wyne is  
not good for a speke man. Thā hys father prayed hym  
hertely for a draught of the fourth tonne. Than answe  
red he & sayd, therof gete ye none, for it is feble & wout  
ony sustentacyō, & suche wyne is not good for you, for  
it is not conforstable. Than sayd hys father, now good  
sone gyue me than of the fyfth tonne. That wyll I not  
quod he, for that tonne is full of lyes & dregges, & suche  
is not for men nor bunnethes for hogges. Than hys fa  
ther sawe he myght gete nothyng of hym, & after was  
as hole as ener he was, than wente he to the kynge of  
Iherusalem end made hys complaynt of his sone, and

— Hewed

deliuered hym the lettre obligatoꝝy whyche his sone had made, wherfoꝝe hys father myght put hym out of the Emppꝛe wythout ony wythsayinge. Whan the kynge herde thys, he called þ̄ Emperours sone to answer his father. And whan he came he coude not answer to his father wyth no reason, wherfoꝝe the kyng put hym frō hys Emppꝛe, and seasoned hys father therein agayne, & so he continued all the dayes of hys lyfe.

**T**hys Emperour betokeneth our loꝝde Jesu Chꝛyst accordyng to the psalmit, saying. He is thy father that hath the in possession, & made the of nought. The lone betoketh man, to whome he gaue all the Emppꝛe of thys woꝝlde, accordyng to thys scripture. Celum celli dñi. &c. That is to say. Heuen he hath gyuen our loꝝde and erth to man. Hankynde made an obligacyō vnto our loꝝde Jesu Chꝛyst whan he receyued hys chꝛystendome at þ̄ font stone, where he behyght hym surety to serue hym truly, & to forsake þ̄ deuyl & all his pomps and vayngloꝝy. This Emperour began to ware sycke on a daye, that is to say, our loꝝde Jesu Chꝛyst is troubled as oftē tymes as a chꝛyste man synneth & breketh hys cōmaundementes, wherfoꝝe he thursteth greatly the helpe of our soule, & than he asket a draught of the fyrst tonne, that is to say, he asketh of man the fyrst age of hys chyldhode to be spente in his seruyce. But anone the wycked man answereth & sayth. I may not do so, for my chyldhode is muste, that is to say, it is so tendre and so yonge that it may not attempte so soone to serue god, whyche is openly false, for the chyld of a daye is not without synne. For saynt GREGOꝝY sayth in his dialogues, that chyldren of .v. yeres of age put out fendes frō the bosomes of theyꝝ fathers. And whan god seeth that



that he may not haue of þ̄ muste of his chyldehode, than  
despyeth he the wyne of þ̄ seconde tonne. Than answereth  
the wycked man & sayth, that hys wyne is not yet  
clere ynough, that is to saye, he is not apte to serue god  
And whan god may not haue of the second tonne, than  
asketh he of the thyrde tonne, that is to say, of þ̄ thyrde  
tonne of hys yowth. Than answereth the wycked man  
and sayth, that wyne is to stronge & myghty, and ther-  
fore hys yowth ought to be spent aboute dedes of this  
woorde, and not in penaunce, wher he shoulde make hym  
feble & weake. Whan god seeth that he may not haue  
of thys tonne, than asketh he of the fourth tonne. And  
than answereth the wycked man & sayth, that an aged  
man is feble & may not fast, ne do no harde penaunce, &  
yf he dyd, he shoulde be cause of hys owne deth. And than  
asketh our lord of the fyfth tonne, that is to say, of his  
olde age whan he dothe crepe & may not go wythout a  
staffe. But the wycked man excuseth hymselfe & sayth  
that thys wyne is to feble to gyue suche a feble man,  
for yf he shoulde fast one day, it were tyme on þ̄ morowe  
to make hys graue. And whan our lord seeth that he  
may not haue of the fyfth tonne, than asketh he of the  
syxth tonne, that is to saye, whan a man is blynde and  
may not go to synne no more, yet despyeth he of suche a  
man drynke, that is to saye, the helpe of hys soule. But  
the wretched man lyenge in despayre sayth. Alas alas  
to me bycause I serued not almyghty god my maker &  
redeemer her in tyme past whyle I was in yowth & in  
prosperyte, but now there is nothyng lefte but onely þ̄  
lyes & the dregges of all wretchednes, therfore what  
shoulde it auayle me now to turne towarde god. But for  
suche men we shoulde mourne. Neuerthelesse god is so  
mercifull,

mercyfull, that though he myght haue no scrupce of  
man in all hys tpyke, yet is he cōtent to haue the lyes of  
hys tonne, that is to say, his good wyll, though he may  
not serue hym otherwyse, & so shal his good wyll stāde  
hym in stede of penaunce. For in what houre the synner  
doth hys penaunce, he shall be saued, as Ezechiel wyt-  
neth. The apostle sayth. Blas alas & woe a waye, for  
there be many that wyll gyue no wyne, ne none other  
thyng to hym, wherfore god shal complayne vnto the  
kyng of Iherusalem, that is to saye, to hys godhede at  
the day of dome, & than god & man shal gyue a sentence  
defensable agaynst suche men, saying. Eluchiel tu  
dedistis. &c. I haue hungered, & ye gaue me no meate.  
I haue thirsted, and ye gaue me no drynke. I do thus  
shall he reherse to the the seven weekes of mercy. And  
whan this is done than shal they be put to euertlastyng  
payne, and the ryghtfull men into euertlastyng blisse,  
where they shall haue lōve wythouten ende. Vnto the  
whych bynng vs our lord Iesu Chryst. Amen.

**I**n Rome dwelled somtyme a myghty Emperoure  
named Antony, vnder whose reygne the rowers on  
the see had taken prysoner a myghty mannes sone of  
an other regyon, & brought hym to þe Emperours prys-  
on fast boude. Whan this ponge man was thus in prys-  
on, he wrote to hys father for hys ransome, but his fa-  
ther wold no ransome paye, ne none other thyng sende  
to comforte hym. This hearynge hys sone, wepte sore &  
myght not be comforted for the unkyndnes of his father  
Thys Emperour had a fayre daughter whych dyspyed  
euery daye this prysoner, & comforted hym as moche as  
she myght. To whome the prysoner answered & sayd.

gel. Ro.

p. j.

How

How shal I be mery, or how may I ioye, thus for to lye  
fast bounde in pryson fro the syght of man, & notwithstanding  
standing thys, it greueth me moze that my father wyll  
not paye my ransom. When thys mayden herbe thys  
she was moued wyth pyte and sayd. Wre frende I am  
soy for the, neuer thelesse if thou wylte graunte me one  
thyng, I shall delyuere the fro this angur sike & payne.  
What thyng is that quod he. That thou wylte take  
me to thy wyfe. Than sayde the prysoner, I promyse  
you surely to fulfyll your entent and desyre, and for the  
moze sykerne I plight you my trouthe. When he had  
so done, it was not longe after the damoyzell delyuered  
hym out of pryson, and hedde awaye wyth hym home  
to hys fathers hous. When the father sawe hys sone &  
the mayden togeder, he asked hys cause why he brought  
her wyth hym. Than sayd hys sone. Syr thys da. ny-  
sell delyuered me out of pryson, and therfore she shal be  
my wyfe. Than sayd hys father. I wyl not cōsent that  
she shal be thy wyfe, for two reasonable causes whych  
I shall shewe the. The fyrst is thys, it is not vnknewen  
to the that the Emperoure her father myght haue had  
for thy delyueraunce great good, and for as moche as  
she was vntreue to her owne father and true to the, it  
seemeth well that thou shouldest not trust longe in her, for  
who is false to her owne father, by reason shold be be-  
ry false and vntreue to an other man. The second reason  
is thys. The cause why she delyuered the out of pryson  
it was neyther for pyte nor for ioye, but for fleschly lust  
that she had to the. For at thy delyueraunce she made  
couenaunt wyth the to be thy wyfe, and had of the thy  
trouthe, and therfore sone it is not reason that she shold  
be thy wyfe. The mayden answered to thys questyō &  
sayd,

sayd. As for the fyrst reason which thou layest agaynst  
me that I holde be vnttrue to my father, that is false,  
for my father hath plente of rycheſſe, & thy ſone is but  
poore, and therfore I holpe hym for pyte, and for none  
other cauſe, and neuertheleſſe thou that art hys father  
wolde not paye hys raiſonſome that he myght be deliue-  
red out of pryſon. Loo for thys cauſe I haue deliue-  
red hym, therfore I am kynder to hym than thou that  
art hys owne father, & he is moze beholden to me than  
to the. Vnto that other reason, where as I ſayſt that I  
deliuered hym by cauſe of fleſhly luſt, I anſwere and  
ſaye playnly that it is not trouthy. For al maner of fleſh-  
ly loue is cauſe of ſtrengthe, or elſe of ſaynes, but thy  
ſone is not ſtronger, for his enpryſonment hath done a-  
waye hys ſtrengthe. He is not ſayne, for by the payne  
that he hath had in pryſon he is made lowe and vnluſty  
to the ſyght, and therfore pyte onely moued me to deli-  
uer hym, and not fleſhly luſt. Than ſayd the ſone vnto  
hys father. Dere father for as moche as I was in pe-  
ryll of deth, and wyte vnto the that thou woldeſt paye  
my raiſonſome that I myght be deliuered, and thou  
woldeſt not helpe me, but this damoyſel of her gentyl-  
nes and for pyte hath ſaued me from deth, and deliue-  
red me out of pryſon, and therfore ſothly ſhe ſhal be my  
wyfe, wherfore forth wyth he wedded her wyth great  
honour, and wyth her ended hys lyfe.

¶ Dere frendes thys Emperour betokeneth the father  
of heuen. The yonge man whyche was taken wyth the  
towers of Iſee betokeneth all mankynde, whych was  
taken wyth the deuyl by the ſpyne of our fore father  
Adam, and was caſt in to the pryſon of hell wyth great  
ſorowe and payne. His father wolde not raiſonſome hym

that is to saye, the worlde wolde do nothyng for hym.  
Thys saye daughter betokeneth the godhede, whych  
came downe from heuen and toke manhode of the byr-  
gyn Marye, and so made a goodly maryage betwene  
hym and man. And vpon thys condycion he deliuered  
mankynde out of thys pryson of hell whan he came fro  
heuen and forsoke the felawshyp of aungels for to dwell  
wyth vs in thys wretched valey of teares. But the fa-  
ther that betokeneth þe worlde, grutcheth euer agaynst  
hym, and wolde not suffre that the soule of man shoulde  
become the spouse of Iesu Chryst, but that she shoulde  
altoay serue hym and forsake our lord. Therefore yf we  
folowe the worlde & hys banytees, sothly we shall fall  
in to the snare of the deuyl. Fro the whyche defende vs  
our blessed sauour Iesu Chryst. Amen.

**S**ometime in Rome dwelled a noble Emperoure  
of great tytulode named Alexander, the whyche  
aboue all vertues loued þe vertue of largesse, wherfore  
he ordeyned a lawe for great curiosite, that no man br-  
der payne of deth shoulde turne a playce in his dyshe at  
hys meate, but onely eate the whyte syde, and not the  
blache, and yf any man wolde attempte to do the con-  
trary, he shoulde dye wythout remedy, but oz he dyed he  
shoulde aske thye bones of the emperour what hym lyst  
(excepte hys lyfe, whyche shoulde be graunted hym). It  
befell after on a daye that there came an erle & his sone  
of a straunge countree to speke wyth the Emperoure.  
And whan thys erle was set to meate, he was serued  
wyth a playce, and he whyche was hungry and had an  
appetyte to his meate, after he had eaten þe whyte syde  
he turned the blache syde & began to eate therof, wher-  
fore



foze anone he was accursed to the Emperoure, bycause  
he had offended agaynst the lawe. Than sayd the Em-  
peroure. Let hym dye accordynge to the lawe wythout  
one delaye. Whan the erles sone herde that hys father  
shold dye, anone he set hym downe on bothe his knees  
tofoze the Emperour and sayd: O my reuerende lord  
foz hys loue that henge vpon the crosse, let me dye foz  
my father. Than sayd the Emperoure. It pleaseth me  
well that one dye foz the offence of the lawe. Than sayd  
thys erles sone, syth it is so that I shall dye, I aske the  
benefytes of the lawe, that is to saye, that I may haue  
thre peticyons graunted o: I dye. The Emperour an-  
swered and sayde. Aske what thou wylte there shall no  
man saye the nay. Than sayd thys yonge knyght. My  
lord ye haue but one doughter, the whyche I desyre of  
your hyghnes that she may lye wyth me a nyght o: I  
dye. The Emperour graunted, though it were agaynst  
his wyll in fulfyllinge of his lawe. Neuerthelesse this  
knyght defouled her not as that nyght. Therfoze plea-  
sed he greatly the Emperour. The seconde peticyon is  
thys, I aske al thy treasour. And anone the Emperour  
graunted, bycause he shold not be called a breker of his  
owne lawe. And whan thys erles sone had receyued þe  
emperours treasour, he departed it bothe to poore and  
ryche, wherfoze he optarned theyr good wylls. My  
thyrde peticyon is thys. I aske my lord that all þe eyen  
may be put out incontynent whyche sawe my father  
eatynge of the blacke playce. Wherfoze the Emperour  
let make an inquisicyon anone who it was that sawe  
the erle turne þe playce. And they that sawe hym turne  
the playce bethought them and sayd wythin themselfe  
yf we knowlege that we sawe hym do thys trespase

p. iij,

than

Right fair to King  
was in our  
youth King  
right fair to King  
was in our  
youth King

than shall our eyes be put out, and therefore it is better  
that he holde vs still. And so there was none founde  
that would accuse hym. When the erles sone sawe thys  
he sayd to the Emperour. My lord quod he, y e se that  
there is no man accuseth my father, therefore gyue ye  
ryghtfull iudgemēt. Then sayd the Emperour. Foras  
moche that no man wyl knowlege that they sawe hym  
turne the playce, therefore I wyl not y hy father shall  
dye. And thus the sone saved his fathers lyfe, & after the  
decease of the Emperour wedded hys daughter.

¶ Dere frendes this Emperour betokeneth the father  
of heuen, whyche ordeyned a lawe that no man shoulde  
turne the blacke syde of the playce, that is to say, there  
shoulde no man labour for rychelesse or lordshyp by coue  
tyse and falsheede. The erle that came to the Emperour  
betokeneth Adam our for father, whyche came out of  
the lande of Damasse to the courte of paradysse and tur  
ned by the blacke syde of the playce whan he ete of the  
apple, wherfore he shoulde haue ben dampned to euer  
lastyng deth. But hys sone that betokeneth our lord  
Jesu Chryst. For he toke fleshe of Adam, and profered  
hymselfe wylfully to dye for hym. The father of heuen  
graunted that he shoulde go downe to dye for mankynde  
Neuerthelesse or he dyed he asked thre peticyons of his  
father of heuen. The fyrst was thys, y he myght haue  
by hym hys daughter, whyche betakeneth the soule of  
man, and byng her wyth hym into the bosome of he  
uen, accozdyng to y wordes of Olee, saying. Despon  
sabo eam michi. That is to saye, I shall wedde her to  
my wyfe. The second peticyon was thys. All the Em  
perours treasour, whyche betokeneth the treasour of  
heuen, accozdyng to thys scripture. Sicut disposuit  
michi

What is the meaning of this  
Lamentation

michipater. That is to saye. Lyke as my father hath  
disposed for me, so I dyspose for you. The thyrde petry-  
cyon was thys, that al they? euen shold be put out, that  
is to saye, that the deuyl whyche dayly accuseth man  
that he myght be put fro the lyght of heuenly grace.  
And thus saued he mankynde and ledde hym bp wyth  
hym vnto the palays of heuen. Vnto the whyche pa-  
lays bypuge vs our lozde Iesus. Amen.

**I**n Rome dwelled somtyme a myghty Emperour na-  
med Nempcyus, whyche on a daye rode to a forrest  
for to spozte hym, where as he mette sodeynly wyth  
a pooze man, to whome he sayde thus. Frende whens  
comest thou, & who art thou. My lord quod he, I come  
fro the nexte cyte, and your man I am. Than sayd the  
Emperoure, thou seemest pooze, therfore yf thou wylte  
be good and true, I shall promote the to great rycheffe  
and honour. Than answered this pooze man and sayd  
My lord I promise you faythfully to be true to you  
as longe as I lyue. The Emperour anone made hym  
knyght, and gaue hym greate rycheffe. Whan he was  
thus promoted, he waxed so proude that he thought  
hymselfe moze able to be an Emperour than hys lord,  
wherfore he made suggestyon to dyuerse lordes of that  
Empyre that he myght vsurpe & take bp hym thugh  
strength of them to be Emperour. Whan y Emperour  
herde thys, anone he exiled hym and al those that were  
consentyng to hym, so that they were put in great wret-  
chednes and sorowe, and than the Emperour ordeyned  
other men in they? stedys, and gaue them all the posses-  
syons of the traytours. And whan the banysshed men  
harde that straungers had taken posselsyō of they? lande  
and

and goodes, anone they conspyred agaynst them, and  
thruugh treason prayed them to a feast. And they as in-  
nocentes thynkynge no treason, came at þ day assigned  
and were serued wryth fyue messes, whych were poy-  
soned, wherfore as many as tasted of that biteyle dyed  
incontynent. Whan the Emperour herde thys, he was  
greatly moued, and called hys counseyle to wyte what  
was best to be done of thys treason and of theyr dethe.  
Than sayd the Emperours sone. My lord I am your  
sone, & ye be my father, and therfore I shall gyue you  
good counseyle and profytable to all men. Not far henc  
is a lyttell realme, wherin dwelleth a fayre mayde and  
a gracypus in the syght of euery man, whych hath an  
ozharde wherin is a well, wherof þ water is of suche  
vertue, that yf it be cast vpon a deed man, anone he  
shall lyue agayne & recouer his lyfe. Therfore my lord  
I shall descende vnto that realme and seke that water  
by the whych they that were slayne at the feast myght  
ryse agayne to lyfe. And whan þ Emperour herde thys  
he was greatly reioysed and sayd. Sone thy counseyle  
is good. And anone the Emperours sone went in to the  
sayd realme, and fell in concepte wryth the mayden, in  
so moche that he entred in to the gardyne and assayed  
of the well. And whan he had so done, he made fyue  
depe trenches in the grounde, in the whych the water  
ranne tyll it came where the deed men lay buried, and  
anone whan the water touched them, they arose from  
deth to lyfe. And than the Emperours sone ledde them  
vnto hys father. And whan the Emperour sawe thys  
he was ryght ioyfull, wherfore he crowned hys sone  
wryth a laureate crowne, in token of vitory, and so he  
ended hys lyfe in rest and peace.

¶ Thys

**T**hyſ Emperoure betokeneth the father of heuen.  
 The pooze mau that was promoted betokeneth Luei-  
 fer, the whych was made of nought and exalted in the  
 Emprye of heuen in ſo greafe ioye and clerenes, that  
 hym ſemed thꝛugh hys pryde that he wolde be lyke al-  
 myghty god, and not onely lyke hym but more than al-  
 myghty god, wherſoze the father of heuen expled hym  
 and all them that conſented vnto hym to hell, & in theyꝝ  
 place man was exalted to great ioye and honour. The  
 deuyl ſeynge thys, enuyed hym that man ſholde come  
 to ſuche gloꝝy and honour, and badde Adam & Eue to  
 a feest whan they ete of the apple agaynſt goddes com-  
 maundement, and counſeyled them thus, ſayinge. In  
 what houre ye eate of þ apple, ye ſhall be lyke goddes.  
 And at thys curſed feest they were ſerued wꝛth ſyue  
 meſſes that were poꝝoned, that is to ſaye, theyꝝ ſyue  
 wyttes were accozded in eatynge of the apple, wherof  
 man was infecte and dꝛed. Thys hearynge the Empe-  
 rours ſone moued wꝛth mercy came dꝛowne frꝛ heuen  
 in to this woꝛlde and acqueynted hym ſo wel wꝛth the  
 bleſſed byꝝgyn Mary, that he ſounde in her the well of  
 manhode, & comoynded it to his godhede, accozdynge to  
 ſcripture. I am þ well of lyfe, who dꝛynketh of it ſhall  
 not thꝛuſt. After that he let make ſyue trenches in the  
 ground, that is to ſaye, ſyue woundes in hys body, of  
 the whyche ranne bothe blode and water, wherby all  
 mankynde was reſſed frꝛ deſth to lyfe, and ledde them  
 bp in to the palays of heuē. Vnto the whych byꝝnge vs  
 our bleſſed ſauꝛour Jeſu Chꝛyſt. Amen.

**S**omtyme in Rome dwelled a myghty emperoure  
 named Dunſtane, in whoſe emprye dwelled a  
 geſ. Ro. q. j. gentyll



gentyll knyght that had two sones. One of hys sones  
wedded hymselfe agaynst hys fathers wyll vnto a com-  
mune woman of the bordell. The knyght hearing this  
exyled hys sone from hym. And whan he was thus ex-  
yled he begote on thys woman a sone. And soone after  
that he waxed sycke & nedefull, wherfoze he sente mes-  
sengers to hys father, besechynge hym of hys mercy.  
Thys hearynge hys father, had compassyon and ruth  
on hym, wherfoze he was reconcyled. And whan he  
was thus brought agayne vnto hys fathers grace, he  
gaue hys sone whych he had begoten tofoze on this com-  
mune woman to hys father. And he full kyndly recey-  
ued it as hys sone, and nuryshed it. Whan hys other  
sone herde this, he sayd to hys father. Father quod he,  
it semeth that thou art out of thy ryght mynde, whych  
I wyll proue by this reason. For he is out of his ryght  
mynde that receyueth a false herze, & nonrlysheth hym  
whose father hath done hym anguyllhe and diseafe to-  
foze. For my bzother whych begate thys chyld hath  
done the great iniury whan he wedded y comune wo-  
man agaynst tny wyll and comaundement, therfoze me  
semeth that thou arte out of thy ryght mynde. Than  
answered the father and sayd. Bycause thy bzother is  
reconcyled thou art enuyous to me & also vnkynde to  
thyne owne bzother, wyllynge to put hym from my fe-  
lawshyp for euermoze, and sothly none vnkynde man  
shall haue myne herytage but yf he be reconcyled. But  
yet thou neuer reconcyled hym of hys vnkynndnes, for  
thou myght haue reconcyled hym, but thou woldest not  
therfoze of myne herytage getest thou no parte.  
The father of the two bzetherne betokeneth the fa-  
ther of heuē. And his two sones betokeneth the nature  
of

of aungels and the nature of man. For man was wed-  
ded to a comune woman of the bozrell whan he ete of  
the apple agaynst the commaundement of god, wher-  
foze he was exyled by the father of heuen and put fro  
the ioyes of paradysse. The sone of the comune woman  
betokeneth mankynde. This knyghtes sone, that is to  
saye Adam began to be nedefull, for after hys synne he  
was put from ioye in to thys wretched baley of teares  
and wepyng, accorpyng to thys scripture. In sudore  
pultus. &c. In the sweete of thy bysage thou shalt eate  
thy breed. But after by the passyon of Chryst he was  
reconsyld. But the other sone that betokeneth the de-  
nyll was euer bnynde, & grutcheth dayly agaynst our  
reconsylyng, sayinge that by synne we ought not to  
commen vnto the herpytage of heuen. Vnto the whyche  
byrnyng vs our lord Iesus. Amen.

**S**omtyme dwelled in Rome a myghty Empe-  
rour named Donate, whyche dyd do make thre  
ymages, of þ whyche one helde out hys hande streyght  
vnto the people, and had on his synger a ryng of gold  
The seconde ymage had a berde of golde. And þ thyrde  
had a mantell of purple, comaundyng vpon payne of  
deth that no man sholde robbe these ymages of þ ryng  
the berde, nor the mantell. It befell afterwarde vpon a  
tyme that one Dionysse a tyraunt came in to the temple  
and toke awaye the ryng from the fyrst ymage, the  
berde from the seconde, & the mantell from the thyrde.  
And anone whan he had thus done, he was forthwyth  
accused vnto the Emperoure and brought befoze hym,  
and was examyned of that trespase, why he despoyled  
the ymages agaynst the Emperours comaundement.  
q. ij. Chan

Then answered this Dionyse and sayd. My lord it is lawfull to answer for my selfe, where as none wyll answer for me, whan I entred in to the temple þ̄ fyrst ymage helde forth hys hande streyght to me, as who sayth, I gyue þ̄ thys ryng, and therfore I toke the ryng at the gyfte of the ymage. And whan I sawe the seconde ymage haupng a berde, I thought thus wyth in mi selfe. I knewe somtyme the father of this ymage whych had no berde, and now hys sone hathe a berde whych is agaynst reason, the sone to haue a berde and the father none. & therfore I toke from hym hys berde that he sholde be lyke hys father. After that whan I sawe the thyrde ymage closed in a mantell of golde, I thought that a mantell of golde was not behouable to hym in wynter, for golde is naturally colde, whych myght because of his deth, and therfore I toke it from hym bycause it was to colde in wynter, and to hote in somer. Whan Dionyse had excused hym by these reasons, the Emperoure answered and sayde. Thou hast answered wyckedly for thy selfe, what sholde cause the rather than any other man to despoyle these ymages, for as moche as I comaunded that no man shold take any thyng awaye fro them, and thine owne mouth hath condemned the. And anone the Emperour called to hym one of hys squyers, & charged hym to smyte of hys heed, and so it was done.

¶ Thys Emperour betokeneth almyghty god the father of heuē. The thre ymagenes betokeneth the poore men, the ryche men, & the myghty men of thys worlde. The tyrant Dionyse betokeneth iustices, Cherysses, baylyes, sergeauntes and catchpolles, and al other of fyces, whych take awaye from poore men the ryng of theyr

theyr fyngers, and saye thus. I may take that is gy-  
uen me. But whan the pooze man hath ought to do, he  
must nedes put forth hys hande to gyue whether he  
wyl or no, yf he shall speede. They take also the herde  
from the ryche men, and saye thus. This man is ry-  
cher than hys father was, therfore take we hys true-  
hode fro hym and make hym lyke his fore father. They  
take also the mantell of golde from the myghty men,  
whan they se ony man of honour and of good luyunge  
wyllynge to cozercke surhe my doers, than saye they.  
This man is to colde, for he enclyneth nothyng to our  
oppynyōs, and also he is to hote of power in werkynge  
agaynst vs, therfore go we & take from hym the man-  
tell of myght, and so they accuse hym and put hym out  
of offyce. But certainly all suche men stande in peryll  
of euerlastyng deth. From the whyche saue vs he, that  
dyed for vs vpon the rode tree. Amen.

**H**ere dwelled somtyme in Rome a myghty Em-  
perour named Enas, whych had a fayre yonge  
lady to hys wyfe, vpon whome he had begoten a fayre  
sone. Whan the states of the Emprye herde thys, they  
came vnto the Emperoure and besought hym to haue  
the keepynge of hys sone. Anone the Emperoure sente a  
sergeaunt through out the Cyte, sayinge that in whose  
house were fyrst founde fyre and water, the good man  
of that house sholde haue his sone in keepynge & to nou-  
ryshe. And than the Emperour made a proclamacon  
that who so euer had his sone to kepe sholde nouryssh  
hym clenly, and fede hym w<sup>th</sup> hollsom meates & drynkes  
And whan the chyld came to age, than sholde he kepe  
be promoted to greate honour, wherfore many men let  
q. iij. make

make redy fyre and water, in hope to haue the chyld.  
But on the nyght whan euery man was a slepe, there  
came a tyzant named Sulapius that quenched þ fyre  
and threwe out the water. Neuerthelesse amonge all  
oher there was a man named Ionathas that labou-  
red so diligently that he kepte bothe daye & nyght fyre  
and water. In a moynynge erly the sergeaunt at the  
Emperours comaundement wente thugh the Cyte &  
sought in euery house for fyre and water, but he coude  
fynde none tyll he came to Ionathas house, where as  
he founde bothe fyre and water redy, wherfore he was  
brought befoze the Emperour, and delyuered hym hys  
sone accor dyng to hys proclamacyō. Whan Ionathas  
had the Emperours sone he ledde hym home vnto hys  
house. And soone after he sente for masons and carpen-  
ters, and let make a stronge chambze of lyme & stone.  
And whan the chambze was made, he sente for payn-  
ters, and let paynt on the wall wythin the chambze. x.  
ymages wyth thys polsey wyrtē aboue theyr heedes.  
Who so defouleth these ymages shall dye a foule deth.  
And than he let drawe on the doze a galous, and a fy-  
gure of hymselfe hangynge therbypon wyth thys polsey  
wyrtē aboue hys heed. So shall he be serued that nou-  
rysheth the Emperours sone amysse. Also he let make  
a chayze of golde, and hymselfe sytynge therein crow-  
ned wyth a crowne of golde, wyth thys superscrypon  
aboue hys heed. Who that nourysheth the emperours  
sone clenly, thus shall he be honoured. Whan this was  
done, oftentymes in his slepe he was tempted to defyle  
these ymages, but anon he redde the superscrypon  
aboue theyr heedes, & than all the temptacyons scared  
And whan the Emperours sone was euyl kepte, than  
wente



wēte he to the galowes and redde they posey that was  
wryten aboue hys owne heed, and for drede thcrof he  
kepte the chylde the better, & was dyligent to gyue at-  
tendaunce on hym. And whan he behelde the chayze &  
hymselfe settynge therein crowned w a crowne of golde  
he was right ioyful, thynkynge to haue a good reward  
for keepynge of the Emperours sone. Whan the Empe-  
rour herde of hys diligent demeanour about hys sone  
he sente for hym & for hys sone, thankynge hym for his  
well keepynge & nourysheynge of hym, and after promo-  
ted hym to greate honour and worshipp.

¶ This Emperour betokeneth y father of heuen. The  
Empresse betokeneth the blessed birgyn Marye. The  
Emperours sone betokeneth our lord Iesu Chryst.  
The sergeaunt that was sente through out the Cyte be-  
tokeneth saynt Iohan Baptyst, whyche was sente be-  
foze our lord, to make redy for hym, accor dyng to ho-  
ly scripture. Ecce mitte angelū. &c. Lo I sende myne  
aungell befoze me. &c. The states that desyred the Em-  
perours sone to nouryshe betoken the patriarches and  
pphetes, which desyred greatly to nouryshe our lord  
Iesu Chryst, and also to se hym, but they myght not se  
hym ne nouryshe hym, for fyre, & water, whych holde  
haue ben cause of theyr syght, was not wth them per-  
fytly. The fyre betokeneth the holy goost, whych had  
not yet appered in them, for they were not washen w  
the water of the font. Also ye may vnderstande by the  
fyre perfyte charyte, and by the water true contricion,  
whyche two now a dayes fayleth in many men, & ther-  
foze they may not haue the lyttel chylde Iesus in theyr  
hertes. Ionathas that watched so dyligently betoke-  
neth euery good chrysten man, whych studyeth euer to  
watche

watche in doyng of good werkes, peldyng to god for  
synnes the fyze of charyte, and the water of contricion  
But after tymes the tyzaunt whyche betokeneth the de-  
uyll, putteth out the fyze of charyte fro mennes hertes,  
and casteth out þe water of contricion, so that they may  
not nourshe the lyttel chyld Jesus. Therfore let vs  
watche as Jonathas dyd, that we entre not in to tem-  
ptacion. And call we vnto vs masons, that is to saye,  
discrete confessours, whyche can make in our hertes a  
chambre of stone, that is to saye, a sure sayth and hope  
Than call we to vs paynters, that is to saye, prechers  
of goddes woꝛde, whyche can paynt in our hertes ten  
ymages, that is to saye, x. comaundementes, whyche  
yf thou kepe and obserue dayly, wythout doubte thou  
shalt be honoured in heuen. And yf thou kepe well the  
Emperours sone, thou shalt sit in a chaire of golde,  
crowned with a crowne of gold. And yf that thou nou-  
rysh the hym not well, wythout doubte thou shalt be hā-  
ged on the galons of hell. from the whych preserve vs  
our blessed sauour Jesus. Amen.

**I**N Rome dwelled somtyme a myghty Emperoure  
named Menaly, whyche had wedded the kynges  
doughter of Hungary, a fayre lady & a gracious in  
all her werkes, and specially she was mercyfull. On a  
tyme as the Emperour lay in hys bedde, he bethought  
hym that he wolde go by syte the holy lande. And on þe  
morrowe he called to hym the Emperesse hys wyfe & hys  
olone onely brother, & thus he sayde. Dearly I may  
not lie I wyll not hyde from you the pꝛeuptes of my  
herte, I purpose to bysyte the holy lande, wherfore I  
bydye the princypally to be lady and gouernours over  
all

all myne Emprye & all my people. And bnder the I ol-  
deyn here my brother to be thy steward for to p[ro]vide  
all thynges that may be p[ro]fyttable to myne Emprye &  
to my people. Than sayde the Emprisse. Syth it wyll  
none other wyse be but that nedes ye wyll go to the ho-  
ly lande, I shall be in your absence as true as ony tra-  
tyll that hath lost her make, for as I byleue ye shal not  
escape thens wyth your lyfe. The Emperour anone co-  
forted her wyth fayre wordes and kyssed her, and after  
that toke hys leue of her and of all other, and so wente  
forth towarde the holy lande. And anone after that the  
Emperour was gone, hys brother became so proude  
that he oppressed poore men, & robbed ryche men, & yet  
dyd he worse than this, for daily he stered the Emprisse  
to synne wyth hym. But euery she answered agayne as  
an holy and a deuoute woman, and sayd. I wyll quod  
the neuer consent to you ne to none other as longe as  
my lord lyueth. Neuertheless hys kynghom wolde not  
teue by this answer, but euery whan he founde hern  
alone he made hys complaynt to her, and stered her by  
all the wayes that he coude to synne wyth hym. When  
this lady sawe that he wolde not cease for no answer  
ne wolde not amende hymselfe, wha she sawe her tyme  
she called to her thre or foure of the best men of the  
Emprye, and sayd to them thus. It is not vnknoen  
to you that my lord the Emperour ordeyned me p[ri]n-  
cipall goneroure of this Emprye, and also he ordeyned  
hys brother to be steward bnder me, and that he shold  
do nothinge wythout my cōseyle, but he dothe all the  
contrary, for he oppresseth greatly poore men, and rob-  
ber ryche men, and yet he wolde do worse, yf he myght  
haye hys entent, wherfore I commaunde you in my  
ges, Ro. r. j. lordes

lordes name that ye bynde hym fast & cast hym in pry-  
son. Chan sayd they. Sothly he hath done many euyl  
dedes syth our lord the Emperour twente, therfore he me  
redy to obey your commaundement, but in thys mater ye  
must answer for vs to our lord the Emperour. Chan  
sayde the dyde ye not, for yf my lord knewe what he  
hath done as welles I, he wolde put hym to a foule  
deeth that coude be thought. A none thes men set hande  
on hym, and bounde hym fast wryth yron charynes, and  
put hym fast in pryson, where as he laye longe tyme af-  
ter, tyll at the last it fortunyd there camre spyrnges that  
the Emperour was comyng home, and had obtayned  
great woꝝ hye and victoꝝ. When his brother herde of  
hys comyng he sayd. Wolde to god my brother myght  
fynde me in pryson, for than wolde he engurpe y cause  
of myne enprysonment of the Emperesse, & the wyll tell  
hym all the trouth, & how I desyre her to fynde me, and  
so for her I shall haue no grace of my brother but lose  
my lyfe, thes knowe I well, therfore it shall not be so.  
Chan sente he a messenger vnto y Emperesse, prayinge  
her for Chyestes passyon that she wolde bouchesafe to  
come vnto y prysoners, that he myght take a worde  
or two wryth her. The Emperesse came to hym, & engur-  
red of hym what he wolde haue. He answered & sayde.  
O lady haue mercy vpon me, for yf the Emperoure my  
brother fynde me in thys pryson, than shall I dye with-  
out ony remedy. Chan sayd the Emperesse, yf I myght  
knowe that thou woldest be a good man & leue thy foly  
thou shouldest haue grace. Chan dyd he promysse her  
sheryly to be true, and to amende all hys trespass. When  
he had thus promysed, the Emperesse deliuered hym a-  
none, and made hym to be bathed and shauen, & rayed

wy  
the  
flet  
he  
wy  
Em  
and  
they  
har  
hou  
wyt  
Em  
ther  
lady  
that  
me  
A fo  
out  
and  
foze  
no m  
the  
Cha  
hang  
shall  
Em  
smpe  
turn  
synn  
her  
and  
selo  
cng

hym woorthypfully accordeinge to hys estate, and than  
he sayd vnto hym thus. Now good brother lepe on thy  
steede and come wyth me, that we may mete my lord.  
He answered and sayd. Lady I am redy to fulfyll your  
wyll and commaundment in all thynges. And than the  
Emperesse take hym wyth her & many other knyghtes,  
and so rode forth to mete wyth the Emperoure, and as  
they rode togyder by þe waye, they sawe where a great  
harte ran afore them, wherfore euerie man wyth suche  
bondes as they had chaſed hym on horsbacke, so that  
wyth þe Emperesse was lefte no creature, save onely the  
Emperours brother, whyche seynge that no man was  
there but they two, thus he sayd vnto þe Emperesse. A oo  
lady here besyde is a prey fowle, and longe it is agone  
that I spake to the of loue, come now and consent vnto  
me that I may lye wyth the. Than sayd the Emperesse  
A foole what may this be, yesterdaie I deliuered the  
out of prysen vpon thy pynesse, in hope of amendment,  
and now thou arte returned to thy folly agayne, wher-  
fore I say now to the as I haue sayd before, there shal  
no man do luche thyng wyth me save onely my lord.  
the Emperour, whyche owesth of very duty so for to do.  
Than sayd he, yf thou wylte not consent to me, I shall  
hange the here vpon a tree in this forest, where no man  
shall fynde the, and so shalt thou dye an euill deth. The  
Emperesse answered mekely and sayde. Though thou  
smyle of my heed and put me to deth wyth all maner of  
turmēt, thou shalt neuer haue me to consent to sache  
synne. When he herde this, he vnclothed her all save  
her smocke, and henge her vp by the heare vpon a tree,  
and tyed her steede besyde her, and so rode forth to hys  
floures, & tolde them that grete hoost of men mette



hym, & toke the Emperesse away from hym. And whan  
he had tolde them thys, they made all greafe sorowe.  
It befell on the thyrde daye after there came an erle to  
hunte in that forest, and as he rode beating the bushes  
there started a fore, whome his boundes folowed fast  
tyll they came nere the tree, where the Emperesse henge.  
And whan the dogges felte the sauour of her, they left  
the fore & ranne towarde the tree as fast as they coude.  
The erle seynge this wondred greatly, and spurred his  
hoise and folowed them tyll he came where as the Em  
peresse henge. Whan the erle sawe her thus hangynge  
he meruayled greatly, for as moche as she was ryght  
fayre and gracys to beholde, wherfore he sayd vnto  
her in thys maner wyse. O woman who art thou, and  
of what countree, and wherfore hangedst thou here in  
thys maner wyse. The Emperesse that was not yet ful  
ly deed, but in poynt redy to dye answered & sayd. I am  
quod she, a straunge woman, and I am comme out fro  
farre countree, but how I came hyther god knoweth.  
Than answered the erle and sayd. Whose hoise is thys  
that standeth here by the hounde to thys tree. Than an  
swered the lady and sayde that it was hers. Whan the  
erle herde thys, he knewe well that she was a gentyl  
woman; and come of some noble kynrede, wherfore he  
was the rather moued wyth pyte, and sayde vnto her.  
O fayre lady thou seemest of gentyll blode, and therfore  
I purpose to deliuer the from thys myschefe, if thou  
wylte promysse to go wyth me and nouryshe my fayre  
pouge daughter, and teche her at home in my castell,  
for I haue no chyld but onely her, & if I kepe her well  
thou shalt haue a good rewarde for thy labour. Than  
sayd she. As farforth as I can, or may, I shall fulfill  
thyne

thyne entent. And whan she had thus promysed hym  
he toke her downe of the tree and ledde her home to his  
castell, and gaue her the keepynge of hys doughter that  
he loued so moche, and she was cheryshed so well that  
she laye euery nyght in the erles chambze & his dought-  
ter wyth her, & in hys chambze euery nyght there bzent  
a lampe, the whyche henge bytwene þe Empresse bedde  
and þe erles bedde. Thys lady bare her so gentilly, that  
she was beloued of euery creature. There was that  
tyme in the erles courte a stewarde, whyche moche lo-  
ued thys Empresse aboue al thynges, and oftentymes  
spake to her of his loue. But she answered hym agayne  
& sayd. Knowe ye dere frende for certayne that I haue  
made a solempne vowe, that I shall neuer loue man in  
suche wyse but onely hym whome I am greatly behol-  
den to loue by goddes comaundment. Than sayd the  
stewarde. Thou wylte not than consent vnto me. My  
lord quod she, what nedeth the ony moze to aske suche  
thyng, the vowe that I haue made, truly shall I kepe  
and holde by the grace of god. And whan the stewarde  
herde thys, he wente hys waye in greate wrathe and  
angre, thynkyng wythin hymselfe, yf I may I shall  
bewroken on the. It befell vpon a nyght wythin thorte  
tyme after that the erles chambze dore was forgoten  
and lefte vnshette, whych the stewarde had anone per-  
ceyued. And whan they were all a slepe, he wente and  
espyed by the lyght of the lampe where the Empresse  
and the yonge mayden laye togyder, and wyth that he  
drew out his knyfe & cutte the throte of þe erles dought-  
ter, and put the bloody knyfe in to the Empresse hande  
she beyng a slepe & nothyng knowyng therof, to the  
entent that whan the erle awaked he shoulde se þe knyfe

in her hande, & that he sholde thynke that she had cutte  
hys doughters throte, wherfore she sholde be put to a  
shameful deth for his myscheuous dede. And whā this  
damoyzell was thus slayne, and the bloody knyfe in the  
Empresse hande, the countesse awaked out of her slepe  
and sawe by the lyght of the lampe the bloody knyfe in  
the Empresse hande, wherfore she was almost out of  
her mynde, and sayd to the erle. O my lord beholde in  
ponder ladyes hande a wonderfull thyng. Anone the  
erle awaked and behelde on the Empresse bedde & sawe  
the bloody knyfe as the countesse had sayd, wherfore he  
was greatly moued, and cryed to her and sayd. Awake  
woman of thy slepe, what thyng is thys that I se in  
thy hande. Anone þe Empresse thzugh hys crye awaked  
out of her slepe, and in her wakyng the knyfe fell out of  
her hande, and wyth that she loked by her & founde the  
erles doughter deed by her syde, and all the bedde full  
of blade, wherfore wyth an huge voyce she cryed & sayd.  
Alas alas & welaway my lordes doughter is slayne.  
Then cryed the countesse vnto the erle wyth a piteous  
voyce and sayd. O my lord, let that deuyllys she womā  
be put to the moost foule deth that can be thought that  
thus hath slayne our onely chylde. And whā the coun  
tesse had sayd thus to the erle, she sayd to the Empresse  
in thys wyse. The hygh god knoweth that thou mische  
uous woman hast slayne my doughter w thyne owne  
handes, for I sawe the bloody knyfe in thy hande, and  
therfore thou shalt dye a foule deth. Then sayd the erle  
in thys wyse. O thou woman, were it not that I drede  
god greatly, I shold cleue thy body wyth my swerde in  
two partes, for I deliuered the from hangynge, & now  
thou hast slayne my doughter, neuertheles for me thou  
shalte

shalte haue no harme, therfore go thy waye out of this  
cite without ony delay, for yf I fynde the here this day  
thou shalte dye an euill deth. Than arose thys wofull  
Empresse and dyd on her clothes, and after lepte on her  
palfray & rode towarde the east alone without ony safe  
conduyte. And as she rode thus mournyng by þ waye  
she espyed on the lefte syde of þ waye a payre of galous  
and seuen sergeauntes ledyng a man to the galous for  
to be haged, wherfore she was moued woth great pyte  
and smote her horse wyth the spurres and rode to them  
prayinge them that she myght bye that mysdoer, yf he  
myght be saued fro deth for ony meede. Than sayd they  
Lady it pleaseth vs well that thou bye hym. A none the  
Empresse accorded woth them & payed hys raunson, &  
than he was delynered. Thus sayde she to hym. Now  
dere frende be true tyl thou dye, lyth I haue delynered  
the from dethe. On my soule quod he, I promysse you  
euer to be true. And whā he had thus sayd, he folowed  
the lady styll tyl they came nygh a cyte, and than sayd  
the empresse to hym. Good frende quod she, go forth thy  
waye afoze me of the cyte and take vp for vs an honest  
lodgynge, for there I purpose to rest a while. Thys  
man wente forth as she commaunded, and toke vp for her  
a good lodgynge & an honest, where as she abode longe  
tyme. Whan the men of the cyte perceyued her faynes  
they wondred greatly, wherfore many of them spake  
vnto her of vnlawfull loue, but all was in vayne, they  
myght no speede in no wyse. It for tuned after on a day  
that there came a thypppe full of marchaundyse, & a rep  
ued in the hanes of that cyte. Whan the lady herde this  
she sayde vnto her seruaunt. Go to the thypppe and se yf  
there be any cloth for myne vse. Her seruaunt went forth  
25

to the thyppe, where as he founde many preppous clothes, wherfoze he prayed y mayster of the thyppe that he shoulde come in to the cite & speke with hys lady. The mayster graunted hym, and so he came home to his lady befoze and warned her of the comynge of y mayster of the thyppe. Anone after y mayster of y thyppe came and saluted the lady worthly. And the lady receyued hym accordynge to hys degree, prayinge hym that she myght haue for her money suche cloth as myght be profitable for her werynge. Anone he graunted that she shoulde haue, & soone they were accorded, wherfoze the seruaunt wente agayne wyth the mayster to y thyppe. And whan they were bothe wythin the thyppe bozde, the mayster sayd to y ladyes seruaunt. Wherfore frende to the I wolde open my counseyle, yf I myght trust in the, and yf the lyst to kepe my counseyle and helpe me, thou shalt haue of me a great rewarde. Than answered he and sayd. I shall (quod he) besworne vnto the on the holy gospels that I shall kepe thy counseyle & fulfyll thyne entent, as farforth as I can. Thā said y mayster of the thyppe, I loue thy lady more than I can tell the, for her faynes is so greates, that I wolde gyue for the loue of her all the golde that I haue, and yf I may obtayne the loue of her thurgh thy helpe, I shall gyue the what so euer thou wylte desyre of me. Than sayd the ladyes seruaunt. Tell me by what meanes I may best speede. Than sayde the mayster of the thyppe. Go home to thy lady agayne and tell her that I wyl not desyre the my cloth but yf she comnie her selfe, but buyng her not to my thyppe but yf the wynde be good & able, for than I purpose to lede her away. Thy counseyle is good quod the ladyes seruaunt, therfore gyue me some rewarde



warde, and I shall fulfill thyne entent. And tohan he  
had thus receyued hys mede, he wente agayne to hys  
lady, and tolde her that by no meanes þe mayster of the  
shyppe wold not deliuer hym the cloth but yf she came  
her selfe. The lady blessed her seruaunt and wente to  
the shyppe. And whan she was wythin þe shyppe boarde  
her seruaunt abode wythout. Whan the mayster sawe  
that she was wythin the shyppe, & that the wynde was  
good, he drew vp the sayle and sayled forth. Whan the  
lady perceyued this, thus she sayde to the mayster. O  
mayster (quod she) what treason is this that thou hast  
done to me. The mayster answered and said. O good lady  
certaynly it is so that I must nedes lye wyth the, & af-  
ter wedde the. Forsothe quod she, I haue made a vowe  
that I shall neuer do suche synnedur wyth hym into  
whome I am bounde by right and by the lawe. Sooth-  
ly quod he, yf ye wyll not graunte me wyth your good  
wyll, I shall cast you out into the myddes of the sea, &  
there shal ye be an euyl death. If it be so (quod she) that  
I must nedes consent of this, than praye I the to  
araye a preuy place in the ende of the shyppe, where as  
I may fulfill thyne entent or I dye, but first I praye  
the that I may saye my oracions unto the father of he-  
uen, that he may haue mercy on me. The mayster bles-  
sed her, toherfore he let ordeyne her a cabon in the ende  
of the shyppe, and in the gothe he set her downe on bakke  
her knees and made her prayes, foringe in hys tosse.  
O thou my lord god that hast kepte me from my youth  
in elenties, kepe me now that I be not defouled, so that  
I may serue the ever wyth cleane herte & mynde. Whan  
she had thus ended her oracion, there arose suddenly a  
great storme in the sea, so that the shyppe all to brak.

and all that were wpythin perpyshed. In the lady that  
caught a cable and laured herselfe, and the mayster of þ  
shyppe an other; neuerthelesse she knewe not of hym,  
ne he of her, for they were dyuen to dyuerse coastes.  
This lady landed in her owne Emprysse beynde a nonry  
wherin she was worshipfully receyued, and she lyued  
so holy a lyfe, þ god gaue her grace to heale syche folke  
of all maner diseases. wherfoze there came moche  
people to her bothe treked, blinde and lame, and every  
man thyngh the grace of god and her holy prayer were  
healed; wherfoze her name was knowne thyngh dy-  
uerse regyons. Neuerthelesse she was not knowne as  
Emprysse. In the same tyme the Emperours brother  
(that had haged he before by the heare) was smitten  
wyth a foule leproy. The knight þ he was the erles dought-  
er, and put the bloody kysse in her hands, was blinde,  
deafe, and had the palsey. The these that betrayed her  
to the mayster of the shyppe was lame and full of the  
cramppe. And the mayster of the shyppe was dymnought  
out of hys mynde. When the Emperour herde that so  
holy a woman was in suche a nonry, he sayd to his bro-  
ther thus: Go we dere brother vnto this holy woman  
that is dwellinge in the nonry, that she may heale the  
of thy leproy. Wolde to god quod he that I were healed.  
At once the Emperour wyth hys brother went towarde  
the nonry. And when the nonnes herde of his comynge  
they receyued hym worshipfully wyth procession. And  
than þ Emperour enquired of þ prioresse yt anye suche  
holy woman were among them that coude heale syche  
folke of theyr diseases. The prioresse answered & sayd  
that suche one was there. Than was þ Emprysse cal-  
led forth before the Emperour, but she muffled her face

as well as the coude, that the Emperour her husbande  
sholde not knowe her, and whan she had so done, she sa  
ferwed hym wylh grete reuerence as it apperternyed to  
hys estate. And he agaynmainly he wyse, sayinge thus,  
O good lady, yf þy grace to heale my brother  
of hys lepre, aske of me what thou wylte; and I shall  
graunte it the for thy rewarde. Whan þe Emperesse herde  
thys, she looked aboute her as she dothe there the Emperours  
brother, that was a foule lepre. She sawe there also  
the knyght that steele the erles daughter blinde & dese  
the there that she saued fro the galowes lame and al  
so the mayster of þe wyppes draught out of his mynde  
and all were come to her for to be healed of theyr syche  
ness, but they knewe not her, for al that they knewe not  
her, she knewe them well. Than sayd she vnto the Em  
perour thus: My reuerend lord, though ye wolde gyue  
me al your Emprye I may not heale my brother, nor  
none of these othes, but of theyr knowlege openly what  
they haue done. Whan the Emperoure herde thys, he  
turned hym towardde hys brother and sayde vnto hym,  
Brother knowlege & pelyt by synne befoze al these men  
that thou mayst be healed of thy sycknes. Than anon  
he began to tell how he had ledde hys lyfe, but he tolde  
not how he had hauged the Emperesse in the forest by þe  
heere. Whan he had knowlege all that hym lyst, the  
Emperesse sayd: Soothly my lord, I wolde gladly laye  
vnto hym my medecyne, but I wote ryght well it is in  
vayne, for he hath not made a full confession. The Em  
peroure hearynge thys, turned hym towardde hys bro  
ther and sayd agayn in thys wyse: What euyl sorow  
is drawyn wyth the does is in the, seest thou not that  
thou art the foule lepre, therfore knowlege thy synne er

ly that thou mayst be hole, or else auoyde myf elatothys  
for enermore. A lord quod he, I may not tell my lyfe  
openly but yf I be fyrst sure of thy grace. What hast  
thou trespassed agaynst me quod the Emperour. Than  
answered his brother and sayd. Myne offence agaynst  
the is greuous, and therfore I aske mercy. The Em-  
peroure thought not on the Emperesse, for as moche as  
he supposed that she had tendered many penes before,  
he chynaunderd his brother to tell forth what he had of-  
fended hym, and he shoulde be forgynen. And whan the  
Emperoure had thus forgynen his brother, he began  
to tell openly how he had despyed the Emperesse to synue  
wyth hym, and how he had hanged her by the heare in  
the forest, bycause she wolde not consent to hym. And  
whan the Emperoure herde thys, he was almost be-  
syde hymselfe, and in his woodnes sayd thus. O thou  
moost wretched creature, the vengeance of god is fal-  
len vpon the, and were it not that I have pardoned the  
thou shouldest vper the moost shamefull deth that coude  
be thought. Than sayd the knyght that shee the erles  
daughter. I wote not quod he of what lady ye meane,  
but well I wote that my lord founde on a tyme suche  
a lady hanging by the heare in the forest, and brought  
her home to his castell, and bet she be his daughter to  
kepe, & nered her as myghte as I coude to synue wyth  
me, but she wolde in no wyse consent to me, wherfore  
I slewe the erles daughter that laye wyth her, & when  
I had so done, I put the bloody knyfe in y ladyes hande  
that the erle shoulde thynke she had slayne his daughter  
wyth her owne handes, and than was she called a henn  
but wher she became I wote not. Than sayd the thefe  
I wote not of what lady ye meane, but well I heare  
that

that seuen fergeauntes were ledynge me to the galous  
and suche a lady came rydunge by, and bought me of  
them, and than wente I wyth her, and afterwarde I  
betrayed her vnto a mayster of a shyppe. Suche a la-  
dy (quod þe mayster of the shyppe) receyued I, & whan  
we were in the myddes of the see, I wolde haue layne  
wyth her, but she late downe to her prayers, and anone  
there arose suche a tempest that þe shyppe all to brast, &  
were all drownd saue I, but what afterwarde befell  
of her wote I not. Than cryed þe Emperesse wyth a hye  
voyce & sayd. Sothly dere frendes ye are now cleue con-  
fessed, wherfore I wyll now laye to my medycyne, and  
anon they receyued theyr helthe. Whan the lady had  
shus done, she opened her face vnto þe Emperoure, & he  
anone knewe her, & ran to her & embraced her in his ar-  
mes & kysed her oftentymes, & fortoye wepte hytterly  
sayinge. Blessed be god, now haue I founde that I de-  
syred. And whan he had thus sayde, he ledde her home  
to his palays wyth great ioye, and after whan it plea-  
sed god, they ended bothe theyr lyues in peace.

¶ Theys Emperoure betokeneth our lord Iesu Christ  
The emperesse betokeneth a holy soule. The emperours  
brother betokeneth the fleshe, to whome our lord hath  
gyuē charge of thes Empyre, but moost principally to  
the soule. For werthelike the wyrd the fleshe costeth  
the soule to spynne. But the soule that longeth god aboue  
all thynges wythstandeth that temptacyō & calleth to  
her, her goodly powere, that is to say, reason, wyll, vnder-  
standynge & conscience, & maketh them to enpryson  
the fleshe that is disobedient to the soule, in the peison  
of penance, vnto þe tyme he shal be reason in al thyng.  
And thus I hope of mercy be spyneth agayne to whome



holy scripture sayth. Maledict' home & peccat in spe.  
Cursed be that man that synneth in hope. And at p last  
the soule enchaineth to the fleshe, and letteth hym out of  
the pryson of penance, & wasseth hym from the synne  
of synne, & arapeth hym wth good vertues, & maketh  
hym lepe on the palfrey of charite, and so rydeth forth  
to meete our lorde an ester dape. But alas full ofte the  
synner trespaceth agaynst holy scripture, wherfore the  
herte, that is to saye, the lust of the fleshe & of synners  
aryeth befoze hym, and after remeith great boundes,  
that is to saye, euyl thoughtes, and so longe they chase  
till the body & the soule be left alone, & thā the fleshe  
stereth that noble soule the spoule of almyghty god to  
hym. But the blessed soule that is so well beloued wth  
god, wyl not forsake her lorde & consent to synne, wher-  
fore p wretched fleshe ful ofte despoyleth her of al her  
clothyng, that is to saye, of all her vertues, & hangeth  
her by by the heare on an oke, that is to saye, on lustes  
and delptes, and there she hangeth vnto the good erle  
cometh, that is to saye, a discrete confessour in the fo-  
rest of this wo:ld, to preche & teche the wo:de of god,  
and takeith her downe and ledeth her forth to p chy: he  
to nouryshe his daughter, that is to saye, to nouryshe  
the conscience wth werkes of mercy. The erle had in his  
chamber a lampa, ryght so euery discrete confessour oz  
precher shoulde haue afoze hym the lampa of holy scrip-  
ture, wherby he may se bothe the greuaunce & the pro-  
fpte of the soule, in techyng of vertues, and puttynge  
awaye of vyce. The steward that stereth her to synne  
is not idle but pryde of lyfe, to whch is steward of this  
wo:ld, by whome many men be deceyued. But whā  
the soule that is so well beloued wth Chy: wyl not  
consent

consent vnto the synne of pryde, than taketh thys cuppe  
sewarde the knyfe of conetysse, wherwyth he sleeth the  
erles daughter, that is to saye, conscience, accordynge  
to scripture, saying. Golde and syluer hath blynded the  
open of iudges, & hath ouerthrowen myse men, so that  
equite and ryghtwysnes myght not entre, but stode a-  
ferre and turned theyr backs. Thys lady also bought  
a man fro hangynge, that is to saye, from euerlastyng  
deth, whyche he had deserued by deedly synne. Ther-  
fore dow as byd thys lady, smyte we our houle, that  
is to say, our flesche wyth the spurres of penaunce, & so  
ryde we forth in all haste to saue our neyghbour from  
the galous of deedly synne, helppynge hym bothe body-  
ly and goostly, as Salomon sayth. Wo be to that man  
lyengein deedly synne, that hath no man to lyfte hym  
out therof. Therfore awake thy neyghbour and helpe  
hym. For a brother that is holpen of another is lyke a  
sure cyte, & yf he gyue no more but a cuppe of colde wa-  
ter to hym in the waye of helpe, he shall not lose hys re-  
warde. But many now a days be full vntynde as was  
thys thefe, whyche falsly deceyued hys lady after y she  
had saued hym fro hangynge. The mayster of y shyppe  
betokeneth y worlde, by whome many men be decey-  
ued. But neuerthelesse as ofte as a man taketh on hym  
wylfully the charge of pouerte, & obeyeth vnto the co-  
maundementes of god, and forsaketh the worlde, than  
breketh the shyppe. For it is impossyble to please god &  
man and the worlde at ones. Whan thys lady had esca-  
ped the tempest of the see, she wente to a nant, that is  
to saye, the soule after y troubles of thys worlde wente  
to the holy lyfe, & than she healed all maner sycke folke,  
that is to saye, euery man that is troubled in hys soule  
that

that is to say, infecte w<sup>th</sup> dyuerse synnes that this  
lady healeth th<sup>rough</sup> holy lyfe. But the soule myght not  
be seen of Chryst her husb<sup>and</sup>, tyll she had knowleged  
openly all her. v. wyttes how she had spent them. But  
whan she had made a pure cōfess<sup>ion</sup>, than y<sup>e</sup> Emperour  
our lord god her husb<sup>and</sup> knewe her, & toke her in his  
armes, & ledde her home to the palays of heuen. Unto  
the whyche almyghty god bynge vs all. Amen.

**I**n Rome dwelled somtyme a myghty Emperour na  
med Martyn, whyche for loue kepte w<sup>th</sup> hym hys  
brothers soule, whome men called fulgētus. W<sup>th</sup>  
thys Martyn dwelled also a knyght that was steward  
of hys Emperour and vncle vnto the Emperour, whyche  
enuyed thys fulgētus, & studyed day & nyght how he  
myght bynge the Emperour & thys chylde at debate,  
wherefore the steward on a daye wente vnto the Em  
perour & sayd. My lord quod he, I tharaim your true  
ferrand<sup>er</sup> of our to warne your hyghnes yf I heare  
any thyng y<sup>e</sup> toucheth your honour, wherefore I haue  
harde suche thynges that I must nedes br<sup>ing</sup> it in se  
crete vnto your lordshipp bytwene vs two. Than sayde  
the Emperour. Good frende quod he, saye on what the  
ys<sup>t</sup>. My moost dere lord quod the steward, fulgen  
tus your cōsyn and your nye hysman hath defamed  
you wonderfully and shamefully th<sup>rough</sup> out all your  
Emperour, sayinge that your byeth synneth, and that he  
is beth to hym to serue you of your cup. Than the Em  
perour wared wrothe, and was almost besyde hym  
selfe for anger, and sayde to hym thus. I praye the my  
good frende tell me the very reouth yf that my byeth to  
synneth as he sayth. My lord quod the steward, y<sup>e</sup>  
may

may beleue me, I neuer perceyued a swifter breth in  
my dayes than yours is. Than sayde the Emperoure,  
I praye the good frende tell me how I may brynge  
this thyng to a good prose. The steward answered  
and sayd, My lord quod he, ye shall ryght well vnder-  
stande the trouth, for to morowe nexte whan he ser-  
ueth you of your cuppe, ye shall se that he shall turne  
awaye hys face from you bycause of your brethe, and  
this is the moost veray prose that may be had of this  
thyng. Forsothe quod the Emperoure, a truer prose  
can not be had of this thyng. Wherefore anone whan  
the steward herde this, he wente streyght to fulgen-  
tius, and toke hym asyde, sayinge thus. Dere frende  
thou art my kynsman, and also nenebve unto my lord  
the Emperoure, therfore if thou wolte com me thanke  
I will tell the of the byce wherof my lord the Empe-  
roure complaineth ofte, and thyneketh to put the from  
hym (but if it be the rather amended) and that myght  
be a greate reproche to the. Than sayd this fulgentius  
I good syr for hys loue that dyed vpon the crosse tell  
me why my lord is so sore moued wth me, for I am  
redy to amedde my defeaute in all that I can or may,  
and for to be ruled by your good and dyscrete counseyle.  
Thy breth quod the steward synketh so sore, that hys  
dynke dothe hym no good, so greuous is vnto hym  
the synkyng breth of thy mouth. Than sayde fulgen-  
tius vnto the steward. Truly that perceyued I ne-  
uer tyll now, but what thyneketh you of my brethe, I  
praye you to tell me the very trouth. Sothly quod the  
steward, it synketh greatly and foule. And this ful-  
gentius beleued all that he sayde, and was ryght so-

ges. Ro.

t. j.

rowfull

rowfull in hys mynde, and prayed the stewarde of hys  
counseyle and helpe in thys wofull case. Than sayd the  
stewarde vnto hym. Yf that thou wilt do by my coun-  
seyle, I shall brynge thys mater to a good conclusyon,  
therfoze do as I shal tell the. I counseyle the for þ best  
and also warne the, that whan thou seruest my lorde  
the Emperoure of hys cuppe, that than thou turne thy  
face away from hym, so that he may not fele thy sty-  
kynge bze the, vnto the tyme that thou hast prouided  
the of some remedy therfoze. Than was Fulgentys  
ryght glad, and sware to hym that he wolde do by hys  
counseyle. Not longe after it befell that thys yonge man  
Fulgentys serued hys lorde as he was woute to do,  
and therwyth sodeynly he turned his face frō hys lorde  
as the stewarde had taught hym. And whan the Em-  
peroure perceyued the auoydng of hys heed, he smote  
thys yonge Fulgentys on the bze wyth hys sote, and  
sayd to hym thus. O thou noughty rybawde, now se  
I well it is true that I haue herde of the, and therfoze  
go thou anone out of my syght, that I se the no moze  
in thys place. And wyth that thys yonge Fulgentys  
wepte full soze, and auorded the place and wente out  
of hys syght. And whan thys was so done, the Empe-  
rour called vnto hym hys steward and sayd. How may  
I put thys rybawde from the worlde that thus hath  
defamed me. My moost dere lorde quod the stewarde,  
ryght well ye shall haue your entent. For here besyde  
wythyn these thre myle ye haue bypckmakers, whyche  
dayly make greete fyres for to brenne bypcke, and also  
they makelyme, therfoze my lorde sende to them thys  
nyght, and charge them vpon payne of deth, that who  
so



so euer cometh to them fyrst on the morow, sayinge to  
them thus. My lord commaundeth you to fulfill hys  
wyl!, that they take hym and cast hym in the forneys  
wyth the stones, and thys nyght comaunde ye thys ful-  
gentius that he go erly in the mornynge to your work-  
men, and that he aske them whether they haue ful-  
filled your wyl! or not, and than shall they accordynge  
to your comaundement cast hym in the fyre, and thus  
shall he dye an euyl deth. Sothly quod the Emperour  
thys counsyle is good, therfore call to me that rybaude  
fulgentius. And whan thys yonge man was come to  
the Emperour, he sayde to hym thus. I charge y<sup>e</sup> vpon  
payne of deth that thou ryse erly in the mornynge and  
go to the brenners of lyme and byrcke, and that thou  
be wyth them before y<sup>e</sup> sonne ryse thre myles from this  
house, and charge them on my behalfe that they ful-  
fill my commaundement, or else they shall dye a shame-  
full deth. Than sayd thys fulgentius. My lord yf god  
wende me my lyfe I shall fulfill your wyl!, though I  
sholde go to the worldes ende. Whan fulgentius had  
thys charge, he coude not slepe for thought, but that  
he must aryse erly for to fulfill hys lordes comaunde-  
ment. The Emperoure aboute mydnyght sente a mes-  
senger on horsbacke vnto his byrcke makers, comaun-  
dyng them vpon payne of deth, that toho so euer came  
to them fyrst in the mornynge, sayinge vnto them the  
Emperours commaundement (whych is before reher-  
sed) that they sholde take hym & cast hym in to the fyre  
and brenne hym to the bare bones. The byrckmakers  
answereb & sayd it sholde be done. And than the messen-  
ger rode home agayne, and tolde the Emperoure that  
t.ij. his

hys comaundement holde be fulfilled. Erly in the moꝝ-  
nyng folowynge fulgentius arose and arayed hym  
towards hys waye, and as he wente he herde a bell  
ryng to masse, wherfore he went to that chyrche for  
to heare masse, and after the eleuacyon of the blessed sa-  
crament he fell a slepe, & there he slepte a longe whyle,  
so that the pꝛiest ne none other myght awake hym.  
The stewarde desyrynge inwardly to heare of hys deth  
and how he dyd, aboute one of the clocke he wente by-  
to the workmen and sayd to them thus. Syrꝛ quod he  
haue ye done the Emperours comaundement oz not.  
They answered hym agayn and sayde. Nay sothly we  
haue not yet done hys comaundement, but anone it  
shall be done. And wyth that they set handes on hym.  
Than cryed the stewarde wyth an hygh voyce & sayde.  
Good syrꝛ saue my lyfe, for the Emperour commaun-  
ded that fulgentius holde be put to deth. Than sayd  
they, the messenger tolde not vs so, but he bade vs tha-  
twho so euer came fyrst to vs in the moꝝnyng, saying  
as is befoze reherfed, that we holde take hym and cast  
hym in to the farnes and bꝛenne hym to asches. And  
wyth that woꝛde they thꝛewe hym in to the fyꝛe. And  
whan he was bꝛente, fulgentius came to them and  
sayd. Good syrꝛ haue ye done my lordes commaunde-  
ment. Ye sothly sayde they, and therfore go ye agayn to  
the Emperour and tell hym so. Than sayd fulgentius  
for Chꝛystes loue tell me that commaundement. We  
had in commaundement sayd they vpon payne of deth,  
that who so euer came to vs fyrst in the moꝝnyng, and  
sayd lyke as thou hast sayde, that we holde take hym  
and cast hym in to the foznys. But afoze the came the  
stewarde,

the whyche byrnge vs our lord Iesu Chryst. Amen.

**U** Here dwelled somtyme in Rome a myghty Emperour named Delphinus, whych had no chyl-  
dren save onely a doughter, whyche was a fayre crea-  
ture, and greatly beloued of her father. As thys Empe-  
rour walked vpon a daye on huntynge in the forest, so  
deply he rode forth out of hys waye, and lost his men,  
wherfore he was greatly disconforted, for he wist not  
whether he rode, ne in what place he was, tyll at the  
last whan he had rydden thus al the daye alone in the  
euenynge he sawe a house, and thyder he rode a great  
pace, and knocked at the gate. A none the good man of  
the house herde hym, and asked the cause of hys knoc-  
kyng, and what he wolde haue. Dere frende quod the  
Emperoure, lo it is nyght as ye may se, therfore I de-  
syre you of lodgyng for the loue of god. Whan he had  
thus sayde, the good man of the house beware that he  
was the Emperoure, answered thus and sayde, Good  
frende quod he I am the Emperours foster, and haue  
plente of benyson and other byseylles for you. Whan  
the Emperoure herde thys, he was ryght glad in hys  
mynde, neuer thelesse he tolde hym not that he was the  
Emperoure. And than the foster opened the gate, and  
receyued hym as woorthypfully as he coude, & set hym  
to hys supper, and serued hym honestly. And whan he  
had supped, the foster brought hym to hys chambze,  
and whan tyme was he wente to bedde. In the same  
nyght it befell that the fosters wyfe was trauaplynge  
of chylde in an other chambze fast by, and was deliue-  
red that same nyght of a fayre sone, And as the Empe-  
rour

roure laye in hys bedde slepyng, hym semed he herde a  
boyce saying to hym thyres these wordes. Take, take,  
take. And wyth that he awoke, and incruayled greatly  
what it myght be, sayinge to hymselfe thus. A boyce  
byddeth me take, take, take, what shall I take. And  
anone he fell a slepe agayne, and the seconde tyme he  
herde a boyce, sayinge vnto hym these wordes. Yelde,  
yelde, yelde. And wyth that he wakened agayne, and  
woundzed greatly, sayinge vnto hymselfe. What may  
thys syghnfy. fyrst I herde a boyce that sayde, take,  
take, take, and nothyng I receyued. And ryght now  
I herde another boyce that sayde, yelde, yelde, yelde,  
what holde I yelde. And as he laye thus thynkyng  
in hym selfe he fell a slepe agayne. And than he herde  
the thyrde boyce, sayinge these wordes thyres. flee,  
flee, flee, for this nyght is a tyde bozne that after thy  
deceit shall be Emperour. Whan the Emperoure herde  
thys, he wakened and woundzed greatly what it myght  
be. In the moornyng early folowynge the Emperoure  
arose, and called to hym the foster & sayd. Dere frende  
I praye the that thou wylte tell me yf ony chylde be  
borne thys nyght to thy knowlege. My wyfe quod the  
foster thys nyght is deliuered of a fayre sone. I praye  
the sayd the Emperoure, Gewe me thy sone. Whan the  
Emperoure had seen the chylde, he sawe a token in the  
chylde's visage, wherby he myght knowe hym an other  
tyme, and than he sayde to the foster thus. Dere frende  
knowest thou who I am. May sothly quod the foster,  
for I sawe you neuer before thys tyme, as farre as I  
am remembred, neuerthelesse it semeth that ye holde  
be a gentylman. Than answered the Emperoure and  
sayd.

being misde

made the ppe of made

sayd. I am quod he the Emperour your lord, to whom  
ye haue lodged thys nyght, wherfore ryght hertely I  
thanke you. This hearynge the foster fell dowlne vpon  
bothe hys knees at his fete, and besought hym of mer-  
cy, yf that he had offended hys hyghnes in ony thyng  
prayinge hym of forgyuenes. Than answered þe Em-  
perour & sayde. Dede the not, for I thanke the hertely  
of thy good chere, & thy sone that was bozne to nyght  
I wyl haue for to nouryshe & brynge vp in my courte  
and to morowe I shall sende for hym. All my gracyous  
lord quod the foster, it is not agreable that suche a no-  
ble Emperour sholde nouryshe the chyld of hys sub-  
gecte and seruaunt, neuerthelesse your wyl be fulfyl-  
led, for whan your messengers comme I shall delyuer  
them my sone. Whan thys was sayde, the Emperoure  
toke hys leue and rode home towarde his palays. And  
whan he was comme home, he called vnto hym suche  
seruautes as he trusted best, and sayde to them thus.  
Go ye quod he vnto my foster, wyth whome I was  
lodged thys nyght in the forest, and receyue of hym his  
sone, of whych hys wyfe was delyuered thys nyght,  
and vpon payne of deth I commaunde you that ye see  
hym by the waye, and cast hys fleshe to the dogges,  
but brynge wyth you the herte to me. And but ye ful-  
fyll my commaundement, ye shall dye the moost foulest  
deth that can be thought. Inome hys seruautes wente  
to the forest and receyued the fosters sone, and brought  
hym wyth them. And whan they were comme nere vnto  
the palays, one of them sayde. How shall we do that  
we may fulfyll our lordes comaundement in slepyng  
of thys chyld. Some answered & sayde that the chyld

gcs. Ro.

b. j.

sholde



holde be slayne, and some wolde haue saued hys lyfe,  
and whyle they stroue thus amonge themselfe, one of  
them that was moost mercyfull sayde vnto the other.  
O my good frendes heare my counseyle, and ye shall  
not forþynke it. yf we murther thys innocent chyld  
we shall greatly offende almyghty god, therfore here  
be ponge pygges, slet we one of them, and than may  
we beare wyth vs hys herte, and present it vnto the  
Emperoure, sayinge that it is the herte of the chyld,  
and thus shall we not shede the chyldes blode. Than  
sayde they, thy counseyle is good, but what shall we do  
wyth the chyld. Good frendes quod he, let vs wzappe  
hym in some clothes & laye hym in some holowe tree,  
for perauenture god wyl helpe hym and saue hys lyfe.  
And whan he had thus sayd, they dyd gladly after hys  
counseyle in all thynges, and slewe the pygge, & wente  
theyr waye and bare home with them the pygges herte  
to the Emperoure, sayinge vnto hym thus. Loo gra-  
cyous lord we haue slayne the chyld as ye comma-  
nded vs, and wyth that they shewed hym the pygges  
herte. The Emperoure supposynge that it had ben the  
chyldes herte, toke it & kest it in to the fyre, despyteous-  
ly sayinge. Loo that is the herte of hym whyche holde  
haue ben Emperoure after me. Loo what is to bylue  
in dremes & byspons, whyche be nought else but fanta-  
syes and bayne thynges. The seconde daye after that  
the chyld was put in to the holowe tree, there came  
an erle fox to hunte in the forest, and as hys houndes  
chaced an harte they came to thys holowe tree where  
the chyld laye, and whan they felte the sanouc of the  
chyld, they wolde go no farther, The erle seynge thys  
meruaylled

meruaylled greatly why hys hoſdes abode there; and  
ſinote his hoſle with the ſpures and rode a great pace  
tyll he came to them. And whan he came vnto the tree  
wherin the chylde was layde, he loked in at an hole &  
ſawe there the chylde lyenge, and than was he ryght  
glad, and toke vp the chylde in hys armes full louyng-  
ly, and bare hym home vnto hys caſtell, ſayinge vnto  
the counteſſe hys wyfe. A oo my dere wyfe, thys daye  
by fortune I haue founde a full fayre chylde in an ho-  
lowe tree as I hunted in þe foreſt, wherof I am ryght  
glad. And byeaule that I neuer begate ſonene dought-  
er on the, ne thou neuer yet conceived a chylde, ther-  
fore I exhorte the that thou wylte ſeyne thy ſelfe tra-  
uaylynge of chylde, and ſaye that thou haſt borne thys  
chylde. The counteſſe fulfilled ryght gladly the erles  
wyl and deſyre, and ſayde. My moost dere lordes, your  
wyl in thys thyng ſhall be done. Not longe after this  
tydynges wente thzugh out all that countree that the  
counteſſe was deliuered of a fayre ſone, wherfore ene-  
ry man made great ioye. The chylde began to growe  
and was ryght well beloued of euery man, and moost  
ſpecially of the erle and of the counteſſe. It befell after  
whan the chylde was. xv. yere of age, the Emperoure  
made a ſolempne feſt vnto all þe lordes of hys Emprye  
vnto the whyche feſt thys erle was called. And at the  
daye aſſygned he came and bzought the chylde w hym  
whyche was at that tyme a fayre yonge ſquer, & car-  
ued at the bozde befoze the erle. The Emperour great-  
ly behelde hym, and eſpyed the token in hys foreheed  
whyche he had ſeen befoze in the ſoſters houſe, wher-  
fore he was greatly moued & vbered wrythin hym ſelfe.

and sayd vnto the erle in this wyse. Whose sone is this  
Sothly sayd the erle, he is my sone. Than sayd þe Em-  
perour. By the fayth and trouth that thou owest vnto  
me, tell me the trouth. The erle seyng that he myght  
not excuse hymselfe by no maner wyse, but that nedes  
he must tell hym the trewth, than tolde he hym al togy-  
ther, how he had founde hym in the forest in an holowe  
tree. Thys hearyng the Emperoure, was almoost out  
of his ryght mynde for anger, and called vnto hym his  
seruauntes whyche he had sente befoze to slee þe chyld.  
And whan they came befoze hym, he made them for to  
swere vpon a boke that they shoulde tell hym the trouth  
what they had done wryth the chyld. Gracyous lord  
sayde they, we put vs vnto your grace & goodnes, for  
wrythout doubte, yf we so moued vs, that we myght not  
slee hym, and than we put hym in an holowe tree, but  
what afterwarde befell of hym, sothly we knowe not,  
and in his steede we slewe a pygge, and brought you the  
herte therof. Whan the Emperoure had herde the hery-  
trewth of thys mater, he sayd vnto þe erle. Thys ponge  
man quod he, shal abyde here wryth me. The erle anon  
graunted, though it was greatly agaynst hys wyll.  
And whan the feest was ended, every man toke hys  
leue at the Emperoure, and wente where as them lyst.  
And at that tyme it fortuneth that the Emperesse & her  
doughter sojourned in a greete countre farre fro thens  
by the comaundement of the Emperour. It befell not  
longe after the Emperour called vnto hym that ponge  
squyer and sayde. The behoueth quod he, to ryde vnto  
the Emperesse my wyse wryth my letters. I am redy at  
your comaundement my lord sayde he, to fulfyll your  
desyre,

desyre. Anone the Emperoure let wyfte letters, wher-  
of the entent was thys. That the Emperesse holde take  
the bearer of these letters, and let hym be drawen at a  
horse tayle, and after that she holde let hym be hanged  
tyll he were deed, and that vpon payne of deth. Whan  
the letters were all made and sealed, than the Empe-  
roure toke them vnto the ponge squyer, comaundynge  
hym to spede hym on hys iourney. And anone þ ponge  
squier receyued them gladly, and put them sure in a  
boxe, and rode forth on his iourney. Whan he had ryd-  
den thre or foure dayes on his iourney, in an euenynge  
he came vnto a castell where as dwelled a knyght, and  
prayed hym mekely of a nightes lodynge. The knyght  
seyng and beholdynge the good fauour of thys ponge  
squier, he graunted hym lodgyng, & made hym good  
chere and well to fare, and afterwarde brought hym  
vnto hys chambze. And whan he was there he wente  
to bedde, and anone fell on slepe, for he was full wery  
of hys iourney, and forgate hys boxe wyth the letters  
lyenge openly in hys chambze. Whan the knyght sawe  
the boxe, he opened it, & founde the letters sealed wyth  
the Emperours sygne manuell, and was greatly tem-  
pted to open them, and at the last he opened them full  
subtylly, and than he redde how the Emperesse vpon  
payne of deth holde put the bearer of them to deth,  
and than he was ryght sorowfull, & sayde wythin hym  
felfe. Alas quod he, it is great ppte to seee suche a fayre  
ponge man, and therfore yf I may, it shall not be so.  
And anone the knyght scraped awaye that wyptynge  
and wrote in þ same paper a letter sayinge these wo-  
des. Vpon payne of deth I commaunde the that thou

b. iij. take

take the ponge squyer bearer of these letters, and let  
hym be wedded wythout ony delay vnto my doughter  
and yours, whyth al the honour & solempnyte that can  
be taught; and whan they be wedded that ye take  
hym as your owne sone, and that he kepe my rowme  
tyll I comme vnto you my selfe. Whan the knyght had  
thus wryten, he closed the letters subtyly & put them  
in to the boxe agayne. Erly in the moornyng the ponge  
squier arose and hastely made hym redy, and toke hys  
leue of the knyght, and rode forth on hys iourney, and  
the thyrde daye after he came vnto the Emprresse, and  
saluted her ryght woꝛthyfully in the Emperours be-  
halfe, and toke her the letters. And whan the Emprresse  
had redde them, anone she sent her messengers thꝛugh  
the countree, commaundyng the states and gentylmen  
to comme vnto her doughters weddyng at a certayne  
daye assygned. Whan they day was come thyder came  
many greate lordes and ladyes, and anone this ponge  
squier wedded the Emperours doughter wyth great  
honour and woꝛthyp, accoꝛdyng to the tenoure of the  
letters, and was ryght well beloued and moost honou-  
red amonge þe people. Not longe after it befell that the  
Emperoure came in to that countree. And whan þe Em-  
prresse herde of her lordes comyng, she toke wyth her  
her sone in lawe wyth moche other people, and wente  
agaynst þe Emperoure for to welcōme hym. Whan the  
Emperoure sawe thys ponge squyer ledyng the Em-  
prresse hys wyfe; he was greatly moued wythin hym  
selfe, and sayde. O thou cursed woman, bycause thou  
hast not fulfilled my comaundement, thou shalt dye  
an euyl deth. And my dere lord quod she, all that ye com-  
maunded



maunded we to do I haue fulfyllled. Nay cursed  
man sayd the Emperour, it is not so, for I wrote to the  
that thou shouldest put hym to deth, and now I se hym  
alyue. My lord quod þe Emperesse, sauynge your grace  
ye wrote to me that I shoulde gyue hym your doughter  
to wyfe, and that on payne of deth, in wytnes wherof  
loo here your letters wyth your owne seale manuell.  
Whan the Emperoure herde thys, he wondred greatly  
and sayd. Is he wedded than to my doughter. Ye soth-  
ly sayd the Emperesse, longe agone w great solempnite  
and wozthyp, and as I byleue your doughter is wyth  
chylde. Than sayd the Emperoure. O thou lord Iesu  
Christ, it is great foly to stryue agaynst thyne ordy-  
naunce, therfore syth it is so, thy wyll must nedes be  
fulfyllled. And with that he toke his sone in lawe in his  
armes & kyssed hym, whyche after hys deth was Em-  
perour, and ended hys lyfe in rest and peace.

¶ Thys Emperour may besoken Herode, or else euery  
synner, whyche walked alone wythout trouth, tyll he  
came to the fosters house, that is to saye, the chyrche  
whyche is the house of god. Thys Herode wolde haue  
slayne thys chylde Iesu, wherfore he sente messengers  
to seke hym, accor dyng to the scrip ture of saynt Ma-  
thewe, tellyng how he comaunded þe thre kynges to seke  
hym, and brynge hym tydynge agayne where he was  
þe he myght come & wozthyp hym also, but thys sayde  
he not for loue, but for decepte. The foster betokeneth  
Iosep our ladyes husbände whyche keppe hym. But  
whan the messengers came, that is to saye, whan the  
thre kynges came, they slewe hym not, but wozthyp-  
ped hym on theyr knees, and lefte hym in the holowe  
tree

tree of hys godhede. The erle that came & fonde thys  
chylde betokeneth the holy goost, whyche warned Jo-  
seph by the aungell in hys slepe, that he sholde take our  
lady and her sone and flee in to the lande of Egypte.  
Thys moralte may be vnderstande otyerwyse. Thys  
Emperoure may betoken a synner that walketh in the  
forest of thys worlde sekynge vanytees and nought els  
vnto the tyme he cometh to the house of god, and there  
he is receyued benygne of the prelats of the chyrche,  
yf he wyll obey the comaundementes of god. But ma-  
ny of vs now a dayes slepeth in the chyrche whan they  
obserue not the werkes of mercy, and therfore ought  
they to drede the voyces whyche I haue reherfed by þ  
fyrst take, that may be vnderstande the great benefyte  
that he gaue the whan he put in the a soule, made at  
hys owne symplytude. By the seconde take is vnder-  
stande the sone of the father of heuen, whyche was  
borne of the blessed virgyn Mary. By the thyrde take  
is vnderstande the same sone of god, whych dyed vpon  
the crosse. By the fyrst yelde is vnderstande, that we  
ought to yelde our soule vnto almyghty god as clene &  
as fayre as he gaue it vs after the waschyng of our  
baptysme. By the seconde yelde is vnderstande, that  
we ought dayly to yelde honour and worschyp and loue  
vnto almyghty god. By þ thyrde yelde is vnderstande  
that we ought to yelde to god true confessyon, contri-  
cyon and satisfaccyon. The fyrst flee betokeneth synne  
whyche we sholde flee. The seconde flee betokeneth the  
worlde whyche we sholde flee for the greate falschede &  
temptacyons that ben therein. The thyrde flee betoke-  
neth everlastynge payne, the whyche we ought to flee  
thruugh

thru  
com  
to t

T  
for  
dye,  
whol  
wed  
hys  
med  
wyt  
den  
slay  
ther  
kny  
a de  
spun  
wha  
dyn  
Art  
and  
man  
led  
and  
he n  
kny  
lyet  
ano  
her

through meryt of your workes, by the whiche we may  
come the rather vnto euerlastyng ioye and blysse. Un-  
to the whiche bringe vs our lord Iesus. Amen.

**A** Here dwelled somtyme in Rome a myghty Em-  
perour named Sauracius, whiche ordeyned  
for a lawe, that who so euer rauysched a virgyn holde  
dye, & yf she were rescowed, than he that rescowed her  
sholde haue her to wyfe, yf hym lyst, and he wolde not  
wedde her, than sholde she be guped and wedded by  
hys counseyle. It befell vpon a daye that a tyraunt na-  
med Poncianus wolde rauysche a virgyn, & ledde her  
wyth hym into a forrest, and defouled her of her may-  
denhede. And whan he had so done, he wolde haue  
slayne her, and as he was despoilyng of her clothes  
there came rydyng by that forrest a curteys & a gentyll  
knyght whych herde the cryenge, and lamentyng of  
a damoyzell, wherfore he smote hys horse wyth hys  
spurres, and rode a greate pace into the forrest, to wyte  
what it myght be. And than he sawe a woman stan-  
dyng naked saue her smocke, & than sayd the knyght.  
Art thou she (sayd he) that cryed so lamentably. Than  
answered the damoyzell and sayde. Ye sothly, for thys  
man that standeth here hath rauysched me and defou-  
led me of my maydenhede, and now he wolde slee me,  
and therfore he hath despoyled me of my clothes that  
he myght smyte of my heed, for the loue of god gentyll  
knyght helpe me now. Than sayde the tyraunt. She  
lyeth, for she is my wyfe, and I haue founde her in  
anoutry wyth an other man, and therfore I wyll slee  
her. Than sayde the knyght. I beleue better the wo-  
man

ges. 130.

E. 1.

man

man than the, for to the tokens of trouth appere openly  
 in her bysage that thou hast rauysched her, and ther-  
 fore wyll I fyght wyth the for her deliuerance. And  
 anon they sterte togyder and fought egerly tyll they  
 were bothe sore wounded. Neuerthelesse the knyght  
 optayned the byctory, and put the tyraunt to flight.  
 Than sayde the knyght vnto the woman. Loo I haue  
 suffred for thy loue many sore woundes, and haue sa-  
 ued the from þe deth, wylte thou therfore be my wyfe.  
 That I desyre you quod she wyth all my herte, & ther-  
 vpon I betake you my teouth. Whan she was thus en-  
 sured, than sayde the knyght. Here besyde is my castell  
 go ye thyder and abyde there tyll I haue bysytred my  
 frendes and my kynnesmen, to prouyde for al thynges  
 nedefull for our weddyng, for I purpose to make a  
 greate feest for thyne honour and woorthyp. My lord  
 quod she, I am redy to fulfyll your wyll. Than wente  
 she forth vnto the castell, where as she was woorthyp-  
 fully receyued. And the knyght went vnto hys frendes  
 for to make hym redy agaynst the daye of maryage.  
 In the meane whyle came Doncyanus the tyraunt to  
 the knyghtes castell, and prayed her that he myght  
 speke wyth her. Than came she downe from the castell  
 to hym. Thys tyraunt subtylly flattered her, and sayd.  
 Gentyll loue yf it please you to consent to me, I shall  
 gyue you bothe golde and syluer and greate rycheffe,  
 and I shall be your seruaunt, and ye my souerayne.  
 Whan the woman herde thys, full lyghtly she was de-  
 ceuyed thugh hys flaterynge language, and graunted  
 hym to be hys wyfe, and toke hym in wyth her into the  
 castell. It was not longe after but that thys knyght  
 came

The firste booke of the adventures of Sir Guy of  
 Warwick.

came home, and founde the castell gate shette & knocked  
therat, but longe it was or he myght haue an answer.  
And at the last the woman came and demaunded why  
he knocked so harde at the gate. Than sayde he to her.  
O lady why hast thou so soone changed my loue  
I come in. Aye sothly sayd she, thou shalt not  
come here, for I haue here wyth me my loue whyche  
I loued before. Remembre quod the knyght that thou  
gaue me thy trowth to be my wyfe, and how I saued  
the from deth, and yf thou ponder not thy fayth, be-  
holde my woundes whyche I haue suffred in my bo-  
dy for thy loue. And anon he vnclothed hymselfe na-  
ked saue hys breeche, that he myght shewe hys woundes  
openly. But she wolde not se them, ne speke moze wyth  
hym, but she tte fast the gate and went her waye. And  
whan the knyght sawe thys, he wente to the Iustye  
and made hys complaynte to hym, prayenge hym to  
gyue ryght wyse iudgement on thys tyraunt and thys  
woman. The iudge called them before hym, and whan  
they were come, the knyght sayd thus. My lord quod  
he, I aske the benefytes of the lawe, whyche is thys.  
Yf a man rescowe a woman from rauyschyng, the  
recouer shall wedde her yf hym lyst, and thys woman  
delyuered I from the handes of the tyraunt, therfore  
I ought to haue her to my wyfe, and farthermore she  
gaue me her fayth and troueh to wedde me, and ther-  
upon she wente to my castell, and I haue done great  
cost agaynst our weddyng, and therfore as it semeth  
me she is my wyfe, as by the lawe. Than sayd the iudge  
to the tyraunt. Thou knowest well that thys knyght  
delyuered her from thy handes, and for her loue he suf-



fred many greuous woundes, and therefore thou  
wotest that she is hys wyfe by the lawe. If thou  
lyst. But after her deliuerance wylth thou saye  
thou had receyued her, therefore thys daye I iudge  
to be hanged. Then sayde the iudge to the woman  
lyke wyfe, O woman thou knowest how thou  
sauest the from death, and thereupon thou betokest  
thy fapth and trouth to be hys wyfe, therefore by  
reasons thou art hys wyfe, first by the lawe and after  
by thy fapth and trouth. Thys notwithstanding thou  
consented afterwarde to the rymour, and bypassest hym  
in to the knyghtes castell, And wher the knyght  
the knyght, an wolde not is hys woundes whiche he  
suffred for thy loue, and therefore I iudge the to be han-  
ged. And so it was done, bothe the ransomer and she  
that was ransomed were dampned to the death, wher-  
fore euery man praysed the iudge for hys ryght wyse  
iudgement.

**T**hye Emperoure betokeneth the father of heuen  
whyche ordeyned for a lawe, that yf the soule of man  
were ransomed from god by synne, the sauer of the  
soule sholde wedde hym, yf hym lyst. The woman that  
was ransomed betokeneth the soule of man, whyche  
was ransomed by synne of our fore father Adam, and  
ledde out of paradysse in to the forrest of thys wretched  
worlde by the tyraunt Doncynas, whyche betokeneth  
the deuyl, and he not onely defouled her by lesynge of  
the herytage of heuen, but also he wolde slee her wyth  
euerlastyng payne. But the soule cryed wyth an hygh  
voyce, whose crye our lord Iesu Chryst herde. Thys  
crye was made whan Adam cryed after þe oyle of met-

cp.

*The London of the  
the Emperour of the East  
the Emperour of the East*

ma-  
tue  
wa-  
the  
a d-  
tho-  
in k-  
the  
syn-  
tho-  
at t-  
E-  
an-  
Bu-  
the  
pny

*in fine amant Riches absent  
Robertus de W...*

ma-  
true tyll  
was nedefull, tha-  
the ascençyon daye al-  
a dwellynge place of eu-  
sholde dwell after the daye of do-  
in honour and glozy. But alas in  
the deuyl and begyled the wretched  
synne, & so he entred in to þ castell of our  
sholde be the castell of god. The knyght I  
at the gate of our herte, accordynge to thys  
Accesso ad hostium et pulso. Lo I stande a  
and knocke, yf ony man wyll open that I ma-  
But where as the deuyl is, god may not entre, but y-  
the synner wyll receyue hym by penaunce, whyche se-  
rynge the gentyll knyght Iesu, betwixt hymselfe naked

l. vi.

hangynge



